





THE
INTEREST
OF
ENGLAND

In the Matter of
Religion,
The First and Second Parts.

Unfolded in the
SOLUTION
Of Three
QUESTIONS.

The Second Impression.

Written by *John Corbet.*

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The Preface.

THe *Indeavours of Pacification between the Subjects of the Prince of Peace, and the Children of the God of Peace, may be well taken from one who hath obtained mercy to be an Embassador of Peace, in the Ministry of Reconciliation. Likewise it may well become any sincere Protestant, Loyal Subject, and true Lover of dear England, to study and bring forth whatsoever hath a tendency to Reconcile those Parties in whom both the King, and the Kingdom, and the Protestant Cause are so highly concerned. I am therefore*
(a 3) *en-*

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encouraged upon this confidence,
That the offer of a willing mind
in this service is acceptable to
God and good men. The Peace
here propounded is the Friend and
Sister of Truth: It offers not to
inthrall or burden Consciēces of
either Perswasion: By allowing
some diversity of Opinion, it takes
away the difference of Parties, and
permits the Points of Difference
to be matters of Speculation but
not of Practice: As to give an in-
stance, Some of the Episcopal way
hold, that a Bishop differs from a
Presbyter in regard of Order; that
he is ordained ad speciale Mini-
sterium. Others of the same way
do hold, That they differ not in
Order but Degree: The Presbyte-
rians believe they are the same in
regard

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regard of Order, yet that a difference in Degree may be admitted; and so they accept of a President-Bishop. Nevertheless, all the Episcopal Divines do judge it ordinarily necessary, that a Presbyter be ordained by a Bishop in conjunction with Presbyters; and none of them (as far as I understand) do judge it unlawful that Acts of Church-Discipline and Government be administered by a Bishop in the like conjunction: And consequently the persons of these several Perswasions need not divide, but may easily be made one in practice, by the regular consociation of Episcopacy and Presbytery. The Peace here pursued was earnestly expected and promised in the late great Revolution. Christian Cha-

(a 4) rity,

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rity, common Honesty, yea, Necessity pleads for this Peace: They who now condemn it, if there be any such, may come to know the want of it as well as others. Let them who have gotten the advantage rejoyce with trembling: for who knows what he is doing, and where is the end of his working, whose judgments are unsearchable, and whose ways are past finding out? The most subtile Politician, whose Writings are not held to savour much of Religion, bath this Religious Observation, — If we consider the course of humane Affairs, we shall many times see things come to pass, and chances happen, for the preventing of which the heavens altogether would not that any order

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der should be taken. *Mach.*—And for example he alleadgeth the great miscarriages of the Roman Commonwealth, in the War with the French, insomuch that they did nothing like to themselves, nor worthy of the Roman Discipline, either for equity, or industry, or courage, or foresight, even until they were brought to the brink of utter ruine. Certainly if the voice of Peace cannot be heard in this remarkable time, when it calls and cries unto us by so manifold pressing engagements, it is of the Lord, who hath not given an ear to hear, nor an heart to consider. I am far from presunning upon the force of my own reasoning in this matter; it is the subject it self that is my confidence, and my heart is in it.

Let

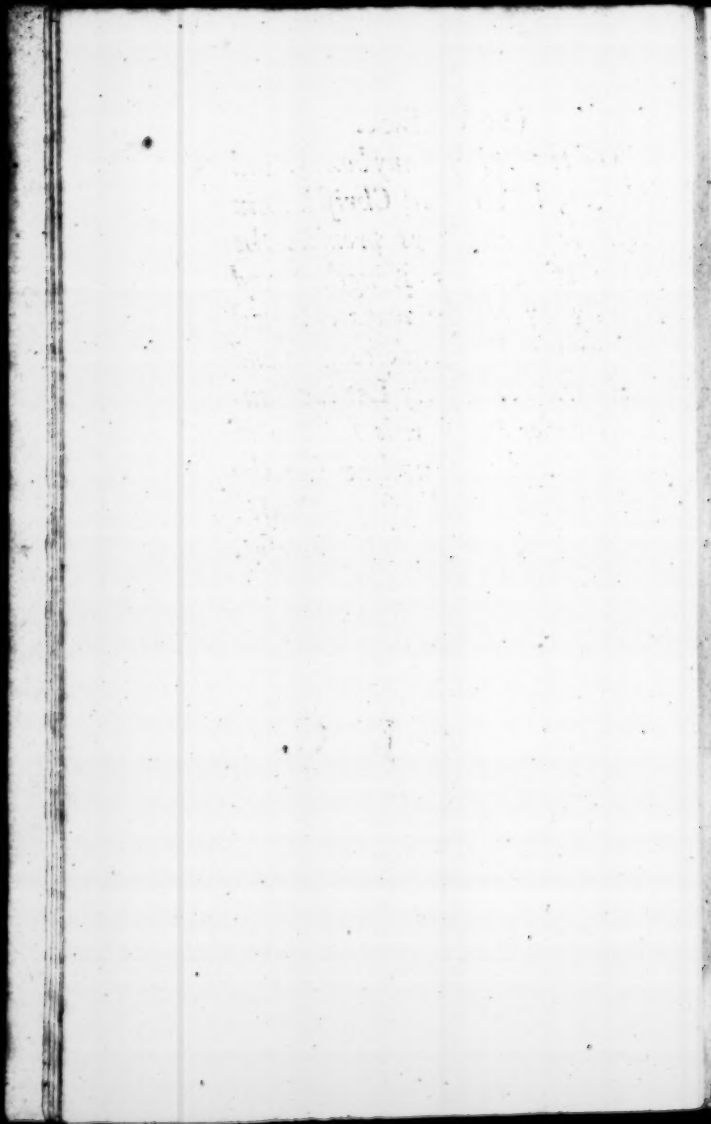
The Preface.

Let the God of Heaven inspire and prosper the King in His Gracious Inclinations to the work of Peace, that all who fear Gods Name may see that in Him the Sun of Righteousness is risen upon them, with healing in his wings. Let the Interest of the Protestant Religion, and the Kingdom of England, prevail with a Protestant English Parliament. Let all Ecclesiastical persons, being the servants of Christ by special Office, cease from seeking their own things, and let them seek the things which are Jesus Christs: Be it far from any of them to smite their fellow-servants whilest they are doing their Masters work. If there be any consolation in Christ, any comfort of Love, any fellowship

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ship of the Spirit, any bowels and mercies, let all good Christians in their several places promote the Peace of Christs Kingdom and Family by all the ways of equal and reasonable Condescension and Forbearance. Lastly, Let the Candid Reader accept this Labour of Love, and not undervalue the weight and worth of the Cause, for the defects of these Discourses.

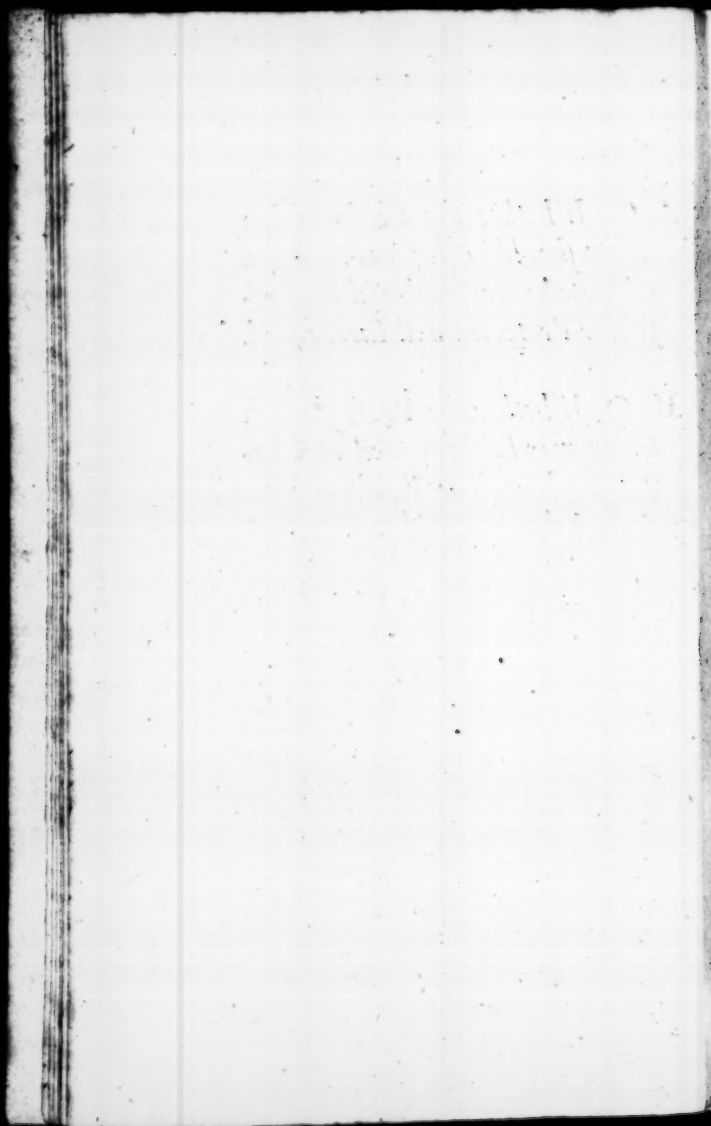
J. C.



I. Q. *Whether the Presbyterian Party should in Justice or Reason of State be Rejected and Depressed, or Protected and Encouraged.*

II. Q. *Whether the Presbyterian Party may be Protected and Encouraged, and the Episcopal not Deserted nor Disobliged.*

III. Q. *Whether the Upholding of both Parties by a just and equal Accommodation, be not in it self more desirable and more agreeable to the State of England, than the absolute Exalting of the one Party, and the total Subversion of the other.*



*The Interest of England in
the Matter of Religion un-
folded in the Solution of three
Questions.*

Section I.

THe Kingdoms of *England, Scot-
land, and Ireland*, legally united
in one King, but by violence sub-
jected to one Usurped Power of differ-
ent Forms successively, were for di-
vers late years reeling to and fro like a
drunken man, and driven hither and thi-
ther like a Ship in a troubled Sea. The
ancient Fundamental Constitution being
overturned, those who took to them-
selves the Government, had gotten a
plenary possession of all the strength by
Sea and Land, detected all Conspiracies,
quashed all Insurrections, and by Policy,
Industry, and wonderfull Success, be-
came

came formidable at home and abroad. The people sorely bruised by a tedious civil War, were glad of some present ease, and generally desired nothing more then to lie down in rest and peace; Likewise the more considerate part of men, though little satisfied in the present state, yet fearing other extreams, were nothing forward to endeavour a totall change, but thought it most adviseable to take things as they were, and to bring them, if it were possible, to some reasonable temper and consistence. Notwithstanding these advantages, the Powers then in Being could never settle in a fixed stable posture; and those who took the first Turn, namely, that Fragment of the Commons House, could by no means advance or get ground in any degree towards it: For besides the general hatred of their Usurpation and Selfish Practices, their Republican Form, and their Designs touching Religion were wholly aliene from the disposition of these Nations. He, who put them down from their Seats, and exalted himself in their
room,

room, reducing the Government to a single Person and a Parliament, set up an Image of the ancient Form, unto which the greater number were not unwilling to bow down, not out of good will to the Person, but for the Forms sake, and hope of Order; And by his able Conduct of Affairs, he became less hated and more feared than at the first, yet not beloved: His chiefeſt Grandees in Council and Army he made nothing to caſhiere, when they appeared to take check at his Proceedings, and ſo he ſeemed to have made a fair progreſs in the eſta bliſhing of his new Dominion. But the truth is, that Party and thoſe means by which he obtained the Power, would in no wiſe permit him to make it ſure: His Army was not like that of *Caſar*, who had no other aim than to make their General Lord of the Roman World, and to ſhare in his fortunes; But it was acted by working Spirits zealous of peculiar Notions touching things both Religious and Civil, utterly repugnant to the way of generall Satisfaction and National

B

Settle-

Settlement. And not onely those of the standing Army, but the whole body of that irregular Party throughout the Nation did generally oppose the Kingship of this Person, who was their head and Chief, conceiving, that the best insuring of their Interest was not by way of legal Stability; but Sword-security. This old Leaven their chief Commander could not purge out, and this Veterane Party could not with safety be abandoned or neglected, until a larger tract of time might beget a better confidence between him and the sober part of the people. But in this unsetled posture being taken off by death he leaves all to a Successor depending rather upon the Courtisie of the present Grandees, and the peoples peaceable inclination, than any potent abilities or interest of his own. After a while, the wild spirit of the Army, before manacled, brake loose, and instantly dissolved the whole frame of that new Model. Forthwith they run into inextricable Errours and Mazes, through unstable and head-long Counsels

self they do and undo, build up and pull down the same things, and are always reeling upon the brink of a Precipice: And at last to hasten an inevitable ruine, the Army and Party combined with it is divided against it self; the bonds of Union are broken, and things brought into extream disorder by a spirit of Ambition, Giddiness, Perverseness, Fury.

Section II.

The Nation grows impatient of these confusions, and conceives just indignation at the disgrace and scorn cast upon it by such ridiculous changes and absurd motions in Government. Considerate men saw plainly; that the state of *England* was grown poor and feeble, and must needs languish more and more till it hath no strength left to resist any Invader, or to subsist under its own charge and burthen. The thoughts of men in general fix upon the exiled Royal Family, as alone sacred to Sovereignty, and alone able by reason of its extensive and grounded Interest to hold and manage it. In this juncture of time the unruly

motions and projects of the prevailing
 part of the Army received some check by
 a Chieftain of High Trust, yet not of
 the Army-spirit. Presently the three
 Kingdoms gaze upon him, musing
 what is the design, and what may be the
 issue of his single opposition. Being a
 Person deliberate, reserved and resolute;
 by ambiguous expressions and winding
 Traverses he amuzes all parties, and feels
 his way step by step, till he finds when
 to declare and where to fix himself. At
 length a full Tide of concurring acci-
 dents carries him to a closure with the so-
 ber part of the Parliamentary party,
 who from first to last intended only a Re-
 formation, and due regulation of things
 in Church and State, but abhorred the
 thought of destroying the King, or
 changing the Fundamental Laws of the
 Kingdom. Whereupon the doors were
 set open to the Re-admission of the Se-
 cluded Members, which necessarily drew
 after it the restoring of King, Lords and
 Commons, according to the ancient con-
 stitution. Nor was it possible in that
 state

state of things, that any other party could peaceably bring about this much desired and long expected end: For the Souldiery however changed and much qualified were not so manageable as to have endured the stirring of those, who were then called *Royalists*, but in any such appearance they were in all reason likely to have deserted their General, and from that rooted principle of self-preservation to have taken such ways and counsels, as might put things to a stand, if not to the utmost hazard. But those prudent and sober-minded Patriots being re-assembled after so long Exclusion, to put a Period to those disorders, did not only prevent the aforesaid mischief, but also beget a good measure of quietness and confidence in the minds of that party which conscientiously adhered to them in the first Cause asserted by both Houses of Parliament, in as much as these longed for nothing more, then the securing of the true Reformed Protestant Religion, and their Civil Rights and Liberties upon the ancient Foundations,

and esteemed the legal settlement of the Kingdom, to be that regular way wherein they might expect that God should meet them, and bless them, and give them peace, and wherein (whatever happens) they should finde security and satisfaction to their own Consciences,

Thus the Divine Providence having first prepared the way, brings back King *Charles* the Second, drawn in the swiftest Chariots, even the affections of his willing people, and amidst their triumphant acclamations peaceably sets him upon the Throne of his Royal Progenitors. And there let him long sit and reign, and let his House and Kingdom be established throughout all Ages. And verily in this great turning time it is of the highest importance to inquire and search how the King and Kingdom, who in so wonderful manner have been restored to each other, may be put into a stable possession of peace, happiness, and security unto all mutual complacency and satisfaction.

After a dreadful Earthquake shaking all the Powers of the Kingdom, and overturning the very Foundations, and after a new frame of things erected standing for divers years, and seemingly stated for perpetuity, the Regal Family and Government is raised up again, not by the power or policy of that party who fought under the Banner of his late Majesty in the Wars, between Him and both Houses of Parliament; But by the restless desire of the Nation, and the vigorous actings of the City of *London*, with the concurrence of the Secluded Members of the Long Parliament, in conjunction with that Renowned Person who then held the power of the Sword: Which it pleased the King to take notice of according to His Princely Condescension in His Gracious Speech to the House of Peers for hastening the Act of Indempnity. [*My Lords, if you do not joyn with Me in extinguishing those fears which keep mens hearts awake, and apprehensive of safety and security, you keep Me*

from performing my promise, which if I had not made, I am persuaded that neither I nor you had been now here: I pray you let Us not deceive those who brought Us, or permitted Us to come together.]

His Majesty thus brought back to a willing and free-spirited people by their own Act, beholds his undoubted Interest set forth to his hand, and made plain before him, which is no other, then a well tempered and composed state of Affairs both Religious and Civil in all his Dominions, by the abolishing of former differences, and the reconciling of all reconcileable Parties; and especially of those grand Parties, which (if made one) do upon the matter carry the whole Nation. And this His Majesties Wisdom hath already observed in that excellent Proclamation against vitious, debauched, and profane persons in these words [*That the Reconciliation and Union of hearts and affections can only with Gods blessing make us rejoyce in each other, and keep our Enemies from rejoycing.*] And this is the earnest expectation and hope of the Religious,

ous, and well affected to publick Tran-
 quility, That the King, our Supream
 Head and Governour, whose gracious
 Disposition doth not suffer him to cleave
 to any divided part of his Subjects, and
 to reject others that are alike Loyal, will
 as a Common Father, protect and che-
 rish all those that are found capable and
 worthy, and become our great Modera-
 tor by his Authority and Wisdom, to
 lessen differencies, and allay Animosities
 between dissenting brethren, which al-
 ready agree in the main Points of Religi-
 on. What was it that brought home
 His Majesty with such impetuous affecti-
 on, & impatience of delay, even in those
 as well as others, who must needs know
 that an abatement of their particular in-
 terest would follow? What was it (I say)
 but a clear knowledge and foresight,
 that all would run to rack and ruin, un-
 less the Publike State did settle speedily
 upon a national bottom, which could not
 be any other then the ancient Royal Fa-
 mily? Wherefore let our hearts reioyce
 that our Dread Sovereign proceeds to
 build

build his Designs, not upon the interest of any one Party, though numerous and powerfull, but upon the common Tranquility and Security of the Nation : So by the blessing of God he will continue a happy and mighty King over a happy and contented people, who will esteem him their Wealth and Strength and Stability, because they know, that none but He under God, can make them happy, and that they can Center and Bottom on none but Him.

Section IV.

Among the various disagreeing Parties within this Kingdom, which seem to render it an indigested Masse of people; two main ones appear above the rest, of so large an interest, that if by any means they might become no more twain, but one; they would take in, and carry along the whole stream & strength of the Nation. And these two are the *Episcopal* and *Presbyterian* Parties, each of them highly laying claim to the Protestant Religion. And undoubtedly whilst these two remain divided, the Kingdom of
England

England, and the Protestant Religion is divided against it self. This dis-union is removed either by the Abolition of one Party, or by the Coalition of both into one. The former if supposed possible, cannot be accomplished but by violent and perillous ways and means. The latter is brought to pass by Accommodation or mutual yielding. Moreover there is a third way imaginable, Toleration indulged to the weaker side. In which of these waies lies the true Interest of the King and Kingdom is the great Case of the time, and the Subject of this Discourse, which presumes not to informe his Majesty; but in subordination unto his declared moderation and condescension, endeavours, by shewing things as they are, to convince and perswade Interested persons, that the Pacification begun for this *Interim* may be intire and perfect and fully settled for perpetual unity. The whole matter rests upon three main Enquiries,

I Qu. *Whether in Justice or reason of*
State

State the Presbyterian Party should be Rejected and Depressed, or Protected and Encouraged.

II Qu. *Whether the Presbyterian Party may be Protected and Encouraged, and the Episcopal not Deserted nor Dis-obliged.*

III Q. *Whether the Upholding of both Parties by a just and equal accommodation be not in itself more desirable and more agreeable to the State of England, than the absolute Exalting of the one Party, and the total Subversion of the other.*

And here let none prejudice the matter by reason of the name *Presbyterian*, which with some is rendred odious; but let the Character hereafter given be heedfully observed. Let none take offence at the name of *Prelate* or *Prelatist*, which is not used for envy but for distinctions sake. Moreover the reasons why the first Inquiry is propounded on the
Presby-

Presbyterians behalf, are, because *Episcopacy* now stands on the rising ground, and seems to have no need of an Advocate. Also the *Presbyterians* aim not at an ample, splendid and potent State; but at Liberty and Security in their lower Orbe; and chiefly because they are by some mis-represented, and by many mis-apprehended, and pre-condemned as inconsistent with publick tranquillity in Church or State.

Section V.

As concerning their true Character, the Notation of the name whereby they are called is both too shallow and too narrow for it. The word *Presbyterian* hath not sufficient depth to go to the root of the matter, nor breadth sufficient to comprehend this sort of men. That Form of Ecclesiastical Government by Parochial and Classcal Presbyteries, Provincial and National Assemblies, is remote enough from their main Cause, and those firm bonds that make them eternally one, in respect whereof many that approve a regulated *Episcopacy*

pacy will be found of their number. For
 there is a vast difference between the an-
 cient *Episcopacy*, and the height of *Pre-
 lacy* or *Hierarchy* of the latter times. This
 later only is the true opposite of *Presby-
 tery*. And so they may not abhor to be
 named in several respects both *Presbyte-
 rian* and *Episcopal*, yet not *Prelatical*.
 Some of them commend, and I think
 most of them here in *England* allow in
 order to peace, *Episcopum Præsitem non
 Principem*. Wherefore as concerning
 their main and rooted principles, they
 admire and magnifie the holy Scriptures;
 and take them for the absolute perfect
 Rule of Faith and Life, without the
 supplement of Ecclesiastical Tradition;
 yet they deny not due respect and reve-
 rence to venerable Antiquity. They as-
 sert the study and knowledge of the
 Scriptures to be the duty and priviledge
 of all Christians, that according to their
 several capacities being skilfull in the
 word of Righteousness they may discern
 between good and evill, and being filled
 with all goodness may be able to exhort
 and

and admonish one another : Yet they acknowledge the necessity of a standing Gospel Ministry, and receive the directive authority of the Church not with implicate Faith, but the Judgement of discretion : They hold the teaching of the Spirit necessary to the saving knowledge of Christ : Yet they do not hold that the Spirit bringeth new Revelations, but that he opens the eyes of the Understanding to discern what is of old revealed in the written Word ; They exalt divine Ordinances, but debase humane Inventions in Gods Worship, particularly Ceremonies properly Religious, and of Instituted Mystical signification : Yet they allow the natural expressions of Reverence and Devotion, as kneeling and lifting up of the hands and eyes in prayer; as also those meer Circumstances of Decency and Order, the omission whereof would make the service of God either undecent or less decent. As they worship God in the spirit according to the simplicity of Gospel Institutions, so they rejoyce in Christ Jesus, having no
 confi-

confidence in a legal Righteousness, but desire to be found in him who is made unto us Righteousness by gracious Imputation: Yet withall they affirm constantly that good works of piety towards God, and of Justice and Charity towards men are necessary to salvation. Their Doctrine bears full conformity with that of the Reformed Churches held forth in their publick Confessions, and particularly with that of the Church of *England* in the nine and thirty Articles, only one or two passages peradventure excepted, so far as they may import the asserting of *Prelacy* and humane Mysticall Ceremonies. They insist much on the necessity of Regeneration, and therein lay the groundwork for the practise of godliness. They press upon themselves and others the severe exercise not of a Popish, outside, formall, but a spirituall and reall mortification, and self-denial, according to the power of Christianity. They are strict observers of the Lords day, and constant in Family prayer: They abstain from oaths, yea petty oaths, and the irreverent

verent usage of Gods name in common discourse; and in a word, they are sober, just and circumspect in their whole behaviour. Such is the temper and constitution of this party, which in its full latitude lies in the middle between those that affect a Ceremoniall Worship, and the height of Hierarchical Government on the one hand, and those that reject an ordained Ministry and settled Church order, and regular Unity, on the other hand.

Section V I.

Within these extensive limits the *Presbyterian* party contains several thousands of learned, godly, orthodox Ministers, being diligent and profitable Preachers of the Word, and exemplary in their Conversation; among whom there are not a few that excell in Polemical and Practical Divinity; also of the judicious, sober, serious part of the people, (in whose affections his Majesty is most concerned) they are not the lesser number. By means of a practical Ministry this way like the Leaven in the Gof-

pel parable hath spread and seasoned the more considerate and teachable sort in all parts of the Kingdom, and especially in the more civilized places, as Cities and Towns. For indeed such as are of this minde and this way, do make Religion their business, and imitate the *Bereans* commended nobleness, resolving not to take up Religion upon trust, but to search the Scriptures daily whether those things which they hear are so, that they may judiciously embrace the truth. Adde hereunto that one of his Majesties Kingdoms is Presbyterian. Certainly such a people may claim a portion in their Gracious Sovereign, and surely he doth not, he will not in any wise refuse them.

Section VII.

The men of this perswasion are not lukewarm, but true Zealots : Nevertheless they have no Fellowship with the spirit of Enthusiastical and Anabaptistical Fancy and Frenzy : They are no Fanaticks, although they begin to be by some abused under that name ; but they
are

are persons of known learning, prudence, piety and gravity, in great numbers, besides of inferiour rank a vaste multitude of knowing serious honest people. None of all which are led blindfold by Tradition or Implicite Faith, or do run head-long into Fanatick Delusions, but they give up themselves to the sole direction and authority of the holy Scriptures. Wherefore impartial reason will conclude, that they chose this way, as with sincerity of affection, so with gravity of Judgement; and that the things themselves, even the more disputable part thereof (as that against the Hierarchy and Ceremonies) as such as may frequently prevail with good and wise men, in as much as they appear to those that have embraced them, to have the Impress of Divine Authority, and the Character of Evangelical Purity.

Section VIII.

For the reasons afore-going the infringement of due Liberty in these matters would perpetuate most unhappy Controversies in the Church from Age

to Age. Let the former times come in and give Evidence. As touching Ceremonies, the Contest began early, even in King *Edward's* Reign, between *Hooper* and other Bishops. The Consecration of *Hooper* Elect Bishop of *Glocester* being stayed because he refused to wear certain Garments used by Popish Bishops, he obtained Letters from the King, and from the Earl of *Warwick* to the Archbishop of *Canterbury* and others, that he might not be burthened with certain Rites and Ceremonies, and an Oath commonly used in the Consecration of Bishops, which were offensive to his Conscience. Nevertheless he found but harsh dealing from his Fellow Bishops, whereof some were afterwards his Fellow Martyrs, and *Ridley* among others, who afterwards thus wrote unto him, when they were both Prisoners for the Gospel. [*However in time past in certain Circumstances and By-matters of Religion your wisdom, and my simplicity (I grant) hath a little jarred, each of us following the abundance of his own sense and*
judge-

judgement; Now be assured, that even with my whole heart in the Bowels of Christ I love you in the truth, and for the truths sake which abideth in us.] Some godly Martyrs in Queen *Maries* days disliked the Ceremonies, and none of them died in the defence of Ceremonies, Liturgie, and Prelacy, in opposition to all other Ecclesiasticall Government and Order. It was the Protestant Verity which they witnessed and sealed in blood in opposition to Popery, especially the prodigious opinion of Transubstantiation, and the abomination of the Romish Mass, or Sacrifice. In the same bloody dayes certain English Protestants being fled for refuge into *Germany*, and settled in *Frankford*, were divided among themselves about the Service-book, even with scandalous breach of Charity, and in the issue the Congregation was sadly broken and dissipated. The Gospel returning under Queen *Elizabeth*, these differences were revived and held up by Disputes, Writings and Addresses to severall Parliaments, and there were great thoughts

of heart for these Divisions. Nevertheless the differences remain uncompounded; in process of time severe Canons were framed, and with much rigour imposed, and so continued: Ministers were distinguished into *Conformists* and *Non-Conformists*; and a multitude of painfull Preachers suffered deprivation for *Non-Conformity*: Be it here observed, that the persons known by the name of *Non-Conformists* were not Separatists, but earnestly opposed the separation of the Brownists, and held Communion with the Church in publick worship upon this pacifick principle, that we may not separate from a true Church blemished with some corruptions and errors, while we are not compelled to subscribe to those errors, nor in our own practice to submit to those Corruptions. Howbeit the greatest part of the Ministers named *Puritans*, yielded Conformity to those controverted Rites and Formes, that were by Law or Canons established, as to things burdensom not desirable, in their nature supposed indifferent, but
in

in their use many ways offensive; and groaning more and more under that yoke of bondage (as they conceived) they waited for deliverance, and were, in the main, of one soul and spirit with the *Non Conformists*: And even then the way called *Puritanism* did not give but get ground. But now the Tenets of this way are rooted more then ever; and those things formerly imposed, are now by many, if not by the most of this way, accounted not only burthensom, but unlawfull. And after a long time of search and practice, the mindes of men are fixed in this opinion, and are not like to be reduced to the practice of former times; and therefore in al reason the imposing of such matters of controverſie as by ſo many are held unlawfull, and by thoſe that have a zeal for them judged indifferent, not neceſſary, cannot procure the peace of Church and Kingdom.

Section IX.

That this numerous party will not vary from its ſelf, or vaniſh upon chan-

ges in Government or new Accidents, doth hence appear, in that it doth not rest upon any private, temporary, variable occasion, but upon a cause perpetual and everlasting: Those forementioned Principles of science and practice, which give it its proper Being, are of that firm and fixed nature, that new contingencies will not alter them, nor length of time wear them out. They are the great things of God, which have a great power over the spirit of man And they are imbraced by such as highly prize them, not for temporal advantages, whereof they have no appearance, but for an internal excellency discerned in them, as being necessary to the glory of God and the salvation of men. And consequently to these men it is not satisfactory, at all adventures to be of the State-Religion, or to believe as the Church believes. Neither will they be dissolved or much weakned by the declining haply of some principall Ones, who being bought off by preterment may turn prevaricators: For notwithstanding

standing such a falling off, the inward spirit that actuates the whole body of them, and knits them to each other, will remain in full strength and vigour. And though many others through weakness or mildness should stagger and give ground in the points of lesser moment and more controverted, yet the root of the matter may remain in them, and as to the main they may be still where they were. But what are those great things for which this sort of men contend? Surely they are no other then the lively opening of the pure Doctrine of the Gospel, the upholding of all Divine Institutions, particularly the strict observation of the Lords day, a laborious and efficacious Ministry taking hold of the Conscience and reaching to the heart, a godly Discipline correcting true and real scandals and disobedience; in a word, all the necessary and effectual means of unfained faith and holy life, that the Kingdom of God may come in power. And for these things sake they are alienated from the height of Prelacy
and

and the pomp of Ceremonious Worship. This was well known and provided against by the swaying part of the later *Prelatists*; For in as much as they could not quell the *Puritans* by the rigid injunction of Conformity, that they might give a blow at the root, Lectures were suppressed, afternoon Sermons on the Lords day prohibited under pretence of Catechizing (which was only a bare rehearsal of the Form of Catechism for Children, without explication or application of those principles) a Book for sports and pastimes on Sundays enjoined to be read by Ministers in their Parish Churches under penalty of deprivation, sundry superstitious Innovations introduced, a new Book of Canons composed, and a new oath for upholding the Hierarchy enforced. Far be it from me to impute these things to all that were in Judgment Episcopal; for I am perswaded, a great, if not the greater part of them disallowed these Innovations. Nevertheless those others that were most vehement, active, watchful, vigorous, did

did not by all the aforesaid means advance, but rather weaken their Cause, and lessen themselves in the esteem of observing men, and the oppressed party increased in number and vigour. It is therefore evident that this Interest, for which we plead, is not like a Meteor which after a while vanisheth away, but is of a solid and firme consistence like a fixed Constellation; And the injuries done unto it are not of that nature, as to be acted once and for all, and then to pass into the grave of oblivion, but they are lasting pressures to a perpetual regret and grievance. And should not these be done away, especially when the occasions thereof will be found not necessary, but superfluous?

Section X.

There remaineth yet some greater thing which strikes deep into this Enquiry, which at the first glance perhaps may seem a fancy, but by impartial judgement will be found a manifest and weighry truth; namely, that as this Interest will never vary from its self, so it will

will never be extinguished, while the State of *England* continues Protestant. I do not now argue from Maximes of Faith and Religion (as that the life and power of Christianity shall never fail, that after the greatest havock of the true Church, there will be a remnant, a seed, that shall spring up to a great increase after a little season) but I have here entred upon a way of reason, and let men of Reason judge. Suppose that the Persons now in being of this strict profession were generally ruined and rooted out, yet let but the Protestant Doctrine, as it is by Law established in the Church of *England*, be upheld and preached, and it will raise up a genuine off-spring of this people, whose way is no other then the life and power of that Doctrine, as it is not onely received by tradition, education, example, or any humane authority, but also imprinted upon the spirit by a lively energy and operation. And this I further say and testifie, let but the free use of the Holy Bible be permitted to the common people, and this generation

tion of men will spring up afresh by the immortall seed of the Word : For that pure, spiritual, and heavenly Doctrine pressing internal renovation, or the new Birth, and the way of holy singularity and circumspection, and being written with such Authority and Majesty, must needs beget, though not in the most, yet in many, a disposition and practise in some sort thereunto conformable. This is evident in reason, if it be granted, that the sacred Scriptures are apt to make deep and strong Impressions upon the minds of men ; And whosoever denies this, as he is in point of Religion Atheistical, so of Understanding brutish ? For even those impious Politicians who in heart make no account of Religion, yet will make shew of giving reverence to it, because it is alwaies seen to have a mighty influence upon men, of all ranks and degrees. Wherefore upon the grounds aforesaid I hold it a matter of unquestionable Verity, that the way in scorn called *Puritanism* will never utterly sink unto *Protestantism* it self shal fail, and

and Popery be set up with a bloody Inquisition.

Section XI.

And verily if there were a design to reconcile *England* to *Rome*, let all means be used totally to quash the *Puritanes* or *Presbyterians*; but if *England* will keep her self pure from Romish Abominations, let her be a kinde Mother to these her Children; For this Interest is one chief strength of the true Reformed Protestant Religion. Let those well known Principles that strike to the heart of Popery be brought forth for evidence, to wit, the perfection of holy Scriptures, in opposition to unwritten Traditions; the Authority of Canonical Books; in opposition to the encroachments of the *Apocrypha*; the distinct knowledge of the Doctrine of Salvation according to every mans capacity, in opposition to implicate Faith; the reasonable serving of God according to the Word, in opposition to blind devotion; Spiritual Gospel Worship, in opposition to a pompous train of Ceremonies; the efficacious edifying

fying use of religious exercises, in opposition to the Popish *Opus operatum* or work done; lastly, the power of godliness, in opposition to splendid Formality. Whether the *Prelatical* or *Presbyterian* party be the more rooted and grounded in these Principles, let knowing persons consider and give judgement. It hath been observ'd, not by vulgar ones, but by States-men in former times, that the *Puritans* stood between the *Papists* and the swaying part of the later *Prelatists* as a partition wall, which was therefore to be broken down (as was reported) to make way for an attempted reconciliation. In those times a *Venetian Agent* in *England* being intimately acquainted with the *Popes Nuncio* here resident, had fathomed the depth of his Religious Negotiation touching this grand affair, and in his account given to the State that sent him, and since published to the world, hath these notable observations; [*That in the Realm of England are three Factions, the Catholics, the Protestants, and the Puritans.* Now saith he [*these three*

three Factions in Religion, though they all oppose one another, yet the hatred of Protestants against Puritans is greater then against Catholicks; and that of Catholicks is greater against Puritans then against Protestants; and that of Puritans is greater against Catholicks then Protestants; and thus both Catholicks and Protestants do easily combine together for the ruine and rooting out of Puritans.] What these Protestants are he thus declares, [they did not so engage themselves to those particular opinions (meaning of the Reformation) but they have since set themselves to reform the abuse of Religion by reducing themselves again to the old practise of their Forefathers.] The Puritans he describes in these words, [that being seasoned and initiated with the Doctrine of Calvin, they judge the English Reformation imperfect, and so refused submission to that form of Policy.] Such is the account of this Statesman, both a Forreigner and a Papist, and not to be supposed partial in favour of Puritans. Now by Protestants he understands only those that adhered

hered to the English Prelacy. And so indeed that party have impropriated the name to themselves, excluding the Presbyterians, who in the mean while complain of palpable injury, and give evident proof, that they of right have as much Interest in that venerable name. As touching the passages here quoted, let them rest on the Relators credit, and their own evidence, whatever it be. What our great Clergie intended, I determine nothing, but in equity leave it questionable. How far they actually advanced this way, be it collected out of their own Writings, and other manifest Expressions.

It is no novelty for Papists to impose the name of *Puritans* on such as retain the old Protestant spirit of Antipathy to *Rome*, which is a good argument to prove, that in the party more peculiarly so called, lies the heart and strength of aversness and enmity to the Heresies and Idolatries of the Roman Church. Wherefore, Those Bishops in the Church of *England* who were heartily

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averse from Popish Innovations, were more benigne and favorable to *Puritans*, and themselves accounted *Puritan* by the adverse party, and upon the same account the Gentry of this Kingdom were so esteemed. And let it be well observed that the more primitive times of *Protestantism* were more leaning to that which Romanizing spirits have called *Puritanism*. (Pardon the frequent use of this terme, for I glory not in it, but am constrained to use it for distinctions sake, in bringing former things to remembrance.) Should not King, Nobles, and Commons remember their Darling *Protestantism*, and not abandon that sort of persons which contribute so much to the upholding of it. It is confessed, there have been some scandals given, yet more taken. But in this case let the saying of our blessed Lord be minded. *Not only woe to the man by whom the offence cometh, but woe to the world because of offences.* It will not be well with *England* while we give way to passion and prejudices from offences taken,

ken; and so run from one extream to another. Where is the wise Counsellour? Can we come to no temper? Is there no healing for us? Shall we sleep securely whilst the Seedsmen of the Envious One, the Jesuits and other Romish Agents, sow the Tares of Division in our Field, not only to weaken and hinder, but to choak and eat out our common Faith? Yea blessed be God for our gracious Sovereign, who makes it his care and study to allay distempers, and compose differences by his just and gracious concessions already published concerning Ecclesiastical Affairs.

Section XII.

The Presbyterians are loaded with many calumnies; as that they are against the Interest of Civil Magistracy; especially of Monarchy, that they are giddy, factious, schismatical, domineering, and what not. Let not prejudice but reason sway mens minds in matters of such importance.

As concerning the Interest of Civil Magistracy, that Presbyterians pluck

from it the power in Causes Ecclesiastical, that they ere& *Imperium in Imperio*, is a groundless and gross mistake. Take the declared Judgment of the highest in that way according to their own words. [To the Political Magistrate is allowed a diatactick, ordering, regulating power about Ecclesiastical Matters in a Political way. So that he warrantably reforms the Church, when corrupted in Divine Worship, Discipline, or Government. He convenes and convokes Synods and Councils made up of Ecclesiastical persons, to advise and conclude determinatively, according to the Word of God, how the Church is to be reformed and refined from corruption, and how to be guided and governed, when reformed. He ratifies and establishes within his Dominions the just and necessary Decrees of the Church in Synods and Councils by his Civil Sanction. He judgeth and determineth definitively with a consequent political judgement or judgement of discretion, concerning things judged and determined antecedently by the Church in reference to his own act. He takes care politically, that even Matters
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and Ordinances meerly and formally Ecclesiastical be duely managed by Ecclesiastical persons orderly called thereunto. He hath a compulsive, punitive, or corrective power formally political in matters of Religion in reference to all sorts of persons and things under his Jurisdiction. He may politically compel the outward man of all persons, Church-Officers, or others under his Dominions, unto external performance of their respective Duties and Offices in matters of Religion, punishing them, if either they neglect to do their Duty at all, or do it corruptly.] Thus they yield unto the Supream Magistrate a supream political power in all spiritual matters, but they do not yield that he is the Fountain of spiritual power, there being a spiritual power belonging to the Church, if there were no Christian Magistrate in the world. They assert only a spiritual power over the Conscience, as intrinsically belonging to the Church; and acknowledge, that no Decree or Canon of the Church can be a binding Law to the Subjects of any Kingdom under tem-

poral penalties, till it be ratified by the Legislative power of that Kingdome, And, they do not claim for the Convocation, or any other Ecclesiastical Convention, an Independency on Parliaments; if they did, surely the Parliament of *England* would resent such a Claim.

Section XIII.

There goes a voice, that the Presbyterians are Antimonarchical; But are their Principles inconsistent with Monarchy, or any impeachment to the same? These are contained in the character above-written; let any of them be called into question, and let Sentence be past upon them, if they be found guilty; but if no particular be herewith charged, the reproach must pass for calumnation, not accusation. Peradventure the exact *Presbytery*, that is, the parity of degree and authority in all Ministers, is that against which this charge is directed: although this parity is not insisted upon, or urged to the breach of peace, neither is it essential to *Presbytery*; yet what reason
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can be rendred why this may not comport with Kingly Government? Or would this sort of men have no King to reign over them? Doth a Re-publique better please them? Did the English or Scottish *Presbyters* ever go about to dissolve Monarchy, and to erect some other kind of Government? In no wise: for in the Solemn League and Covenant they bound themselves to endeavour the preservation of the Kings person and Authority, and declared they had no intent to diminish his Majesties just power and greatness. After the violent change of Government, they came slowest and entred latest into those new Engagements imposed by the usurp'd Powers, and some utterly refused, even to the forfeiture of their preferments, and the hazard of their livelihoods, when the Nation in general submitted to the yoke; and many of those who thus object against them, did intempORIZING run with the foremost. The truth is, the generality of Conscientious Presbyterians never ran with the current of those times. Some

more eminent among them, Ministers and others, hazarded their lives, and others lost their lives in combining to bring our Sovereign, that now is, to the rightful possession of this His Kingdom. And those in *Scotland* adventured no more then all to uphold him; and when He lost the day, they lost their Liberty, and when He fell, it was said by the Adversary, *Presbytery was fallen*. I have known when keeping company with the chief Presbyterian Ministers hath been objected by the Republican Council of State for a crime causing Imprisonment. Lastly, the Presbyterians by their influence first divided, and then dissipated the Sectarian party, and so made way for his Majesties Return in peace. And it is acknowledged by some eminent on the Episcopal side, that the sense of the Covenant hath lately quickned many mens Consciences in their Allegiance to the King, so as to bring him with *David* home in infinite joy and triumph. All which do shew plainly, that they are not averse from Regal Government, or the
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Royal Family, but they desire to dwell under the shadow of our dread Sovereign, hoping to renive as the Corn, and to grow as the Vine under his gracious influence. Peradventure it is said, they would enervate Monarchy, and render it too impotent. Surely I cannot finde the rise of this Objection, unless from hence, that they were not willing to come under any yoke but that of the Laws of the Realm, or to pay arbitrary Taxes levied without consent of Parliament. I confess there are none that more reverence their Liberties, and value the native happiness of the free born Subjects of *England*. And verily their true knowledge and sense of the nature of Christian Religion makes a due freedom exceeding precious: For this Religion is not variable according to the will of man, but grounded upon an unchangeable and eternall truth, and doth indispensibly binde every Soul high and low to one divine law and rule perpetual and unalterable. And therefore it doth strongly plead the expedience of a due
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civil liberty on the behalf of its Professors; yet such a liberty as will not infectible Monarchy, nor the legal power of the Kings of *England*. And without controversie, a King ruling a free people hath a power much more noble and more free, then he that ruleth over perfect Vassals, that hath no Propriety. The power is more noble, because it hath a more noble subject of Government; it is more honourable to rule men then beasts, and Free men then Slaves. Likewise the power is more free: For whatsoever Prince hath not his power limited by his peoples legal freedom, he will be bound up some other way, either by the potency of subordinate Princes and great Lords within the Realm, or by a veterane Army, as the Turkish Emperour by his Janizaries, and the Roman *Cæsars* by the Pretorian Bands and the Legions. Upon which account, to be a powerful Monarch over a free people, is the freedom and glory of our Sovereign Lord, above all the Potentates on earth.

But Rebellion and Disobedience is the loud out-cry of some against this party. And this were a crying sin indeed. But let not sober minds be hurried into prejudice by such exclamations and out-cries. It were to be wished, for common peace and amity, that the late publick discords were eternally forgotten. But seeing some in these times of expected Reconciliation will not cease to implead and condemn the honest minded, and render them odious to the higher Powers, a necessity is laid upon us to speak something Apologetical, at least to mitigate the business and remove prejudice. The Presbyterian party in *England* never engaged under a less Authority than that of both Houses of *Parliament*. I have read that the *Parliament* of *England* hath several capacities, and among the rest, these two; First, that it represents the people as Subjects, and so it can do nothing but manifest their grievances, and petition for relief. Secondly, that by the constitution it hath
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part in the Sovereignty, and so it hath part in the legislative power, and in the final judgment. Now when as a part of the Legislative Power resides in the two Houses, as also a power to redress grievances, and to call into question all Ministers of State and Justice, and all Subjects of whatsoever degree in case of Delinquency, it might be thought that a part of the supream power doth reside in them, though they have not the honorary Title: And this part of the supream power is indeed capable of doing wrong; yet how it might be guilty of Rebellion is more difficult to conceive. In this high and tender point it belongs not to me to determine. And as touching the much debated point of resisting the higher powers, without passing any judgment in the great Case of *England*, I shall only make rehearsal of the words of *Grotius* a man of Renown, and known to be neither Anti-monarchical, nor Anti-prelatical, which are found in his Book *de jure belli & pacis*, by himself dedicated to the French King. [*Si Rex partem*

partem habeat summi Imperii, partem alteram populus aut Senatus, Regi in partem non suam involanti, vis justa opponi poterit, quia eatenus imperium non habet. Quod locum habere censeo, etiamsi dictum sis, belli potestatem penes Regem fore. Id enim de bello externo intelligendum est, cum aliqui quisque imperii summi partem habeat, non possit non jus habere eam partem tuendi.]

lib. 1. c. 4. §. 13. With reverence to Sovereign Majesty I crave leave to speak this word of truth and soberness. In a knowing age flattery doth not really exalt or secure the Royal Prerogative; the Authority of Parliaments being depressed and undervalued is the more searched into and urged. Concerning the utmost bounds and limits of Royal Prerogative and Parliamentary Power the Law in deep wisdom chuseth to keep silence, for it always supposeth union, not division between King and Parliament. Wherefore the overstraining on either hand, let all men forbear: His Majesties wisdom and goodness, and his peoples obedience and loyalty in all ways of mutual

mutual satisfaction will best secure His Prerogative and their Liberty. Moreover as to the point of Loyalty now in question, the subversion of the Fundamental Government of this Kingdome could not be effected, till those Members of *Parliament* that were *Presbyterian* were many of them imprisoned, others forcibly secluded by the violence of the Army, and the rest thereupon withdrew from the House of Commons. For they had voted the Kings Concessions, a ground sufficient for the Houses to proceed to settle the Nation, and were willing to cast whatsoever they contended for upon a legal security. In those times the *Presbyterian* Ministers of *London* in their publick vindication thus declare themselves. [*We profess before God, Angels and Men, that we verily believe that that which is so much feared to be now in agitation, the taking away of the life of the King in this present way of Tryal, is not only not agreeable to the Word of God, the Principles of the Protestant Religion & never yet stained with the least drop of the blood*

blood of a King) or the Fundamental Constitution and Government of this Kingdom, but contrary to them, as also to the Oath of Allegiance, the Protestation of May 5. 1641. and the Solemn League and Covenant; from all which, or any of which Engagements, we know not any Power on earth able to absolve us or others.] And in conclusion they warn and exhort men to pray for the King, that God would restrain the violence of men, that they may not dare to draw upon themselves and the Kingdome the blood of their Sovereign. Let prudent men weigh things in the ballance of Reason. Is there any thing in the nature of *Prelacy* that frames the mind to obedience and loyalty? or is there any thing in the nature of *Presbytery* that inclines to rebellion and disobedience? If Loyalty be the innate disposition of *Prelacy*, how comes it to pass, that in ancient times, and for a series of many ages, the Kings of *England* have had such tedious conflicts with *Prelates* in their Dominions? If *Presbytery* and Rebellion be connatural, how comes it to

to pass, that those States or Kingdomes where it hath been established or tolerated have for any time been free from broyls and commotions? or that *Presbyterians* have never disclaimed or abandoned their lawful Prince, that they have never ceased to sollicite and supplicate his regards and favour, even when their power hath been at the highest, and his sunk lowest; yea, that they have suffered themselves rather to be trodden under foot, then to comply with men of violence in changing the Government? Let us further examine, are the persons that adhere to *Prelacy* more conscientious in duty to God and man then those that affect *Presbytery*? Are the former only sober, just and godly, and the latter vicious, unrighteous, prophane? Certainly if it hath been the lot of the one for a time to comply more with Kings then the other hath done, it ariseth not from any peculiar innate disposition of the one or the other, but something extrinsecal and accidental, and what that may be, let prudent men make their own observations.

Their principles, whose cause is now
 pleaded, if faithfully received and kept
 will make good men and good Christi-
 ans, and therefore cannot but make good
 subjects. When men have learned to
 fear God, they will honour the King in-
 deed, and none are more observant of
 righteous Laws then they that are most
 a law to themselves, yea their pattern and
 practice will be a law to many others,
 and consequently a main help to civil
 Government in a Christian Nation :
 Whosoever they be that teach blind o-
 bedience, Presbyterians teach faith and
 holiness, as also obedience active in all
 lawful things, and passive in things un-
 lawful enjoined by the higher power. In
 the late distracted times the publick State
 was out of frame, always ready to fall
 asunder, the minds of people were un-
 quiet and unsettled ; those that held the
 power could never gain half that awful
 regard and reverence which was given to
 Kings, Nobles, and men of Authority in
 former times, Nevertheless, profane-
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intemperance, revellings, out-rages, and filthy lewdness, were not at any time in the memory of the present age, held under more restraint. Surely some special reason may be rendred, why in such want of publick Order, there should not be a greater disorder in mens lives and manners then at other times; which I conceive is manifest, to wit, that by means of a practical Ministry more thick set throughout the Nation, knowledge and restraining grace did more abound, and the orderly walking of religious persons did keep others more within compass, and withal, strictness of life was not openly derided under the name of *Puritanism*. Those places where *Presbyterian* Ministers had the greatest influence, were evidently the most reformed and civiliz'd, for which cause they were so much hated by men of loose principles and dissolute lives. Whereupon we affirm boldly, That those for whom we plead must needs be good Subjects to a Christian King, and good members of a Christian Commonwealth.

Neither are they wandring Stars, a people given to change, fit to overturn and pull down, but not to build up. They do not hang in the air, but build upon a firm ground; they have settled principles consistent with the rules of stable policy. Contrariwise, Fanaticks (ruly and not abusively so called) do build castles in the air, and are fit instruments to disturb and destroy and root out, but never to compose and plant and settle; for which cause their Kingdom could never hold long in any time or place of the world. Upon this ground *Presbytery*, not sectarian Anarchy, hath been assaulted with greatest violence by the more observing *Prelatists*; against this they have raised their main batteries, this appeared formidable, for it is stable and uniform, and like to hold if once settled in good earnest. This party do not run so fast, but they know where to stop; they are a number of men so fixed and constant as none more, and a Prince or State shall know where to find them. They do not strain so high,

but they consider withal what the Kingdoms of the world will bear, and are willing to bring things to the capacity of political Government. They can have no pleasure in commotions and alterations, for order and regular unity is their way, and therefore stability of Government and publick tranquillity is their interest. It is most unreasonable to object, that the late wilde postures, extravagancies and incongruities in Government, were the work of *Presbytery* or *Presbyterians*. The Nation had never proof of *Presbytery*, for it was never settled, but rather decryed and exposed to prejudice by those that were in sway, and that in the more early times of the late Wars. The truth of this matter is cleared by a passage of our late Sovereign in a Letter to his Majesty that now is.] *All the lesser Factions were at first officious Servants to Presbytery their great Master, till time and Military Success discovering to each their particular advantages, invited them to part stakes, and leaving the joynt flock of uniform Religion, pretended each to drive for their*

their party the trade of profits and preferments, to the breaking and undoing not only of the Church and State, but of Presbytery it self.] Thus the joynt stock of uniform Religion was left, and Presbytery neglected, before the first War was ended: Yea, and those that stedfastly adhered to it were maligned and reviled by the exorbitant party for opposing their new models or agreements of the people.

Section XVII.

Neither can Sects or Schisms with any truth or justice be reckoned the Offspring of Presbytery. Consider the *French, Dutch, Helvetian Churches*, how intire they keep themselves in Orthodox Vnity from the Gangreen of Sects and Schisms. A wide Breach was once made in the Netherlands by *Arminius* and his Followers, but after some years conflict, it was healed by the Synod of *Dort*. The Church of *Scotland* is inferior to none in the unity of Doctrine and Church-Communion; and their form of Ecclesiastical Policy, and method of Discipline is very effectual to

prevent the broaching of Errour. King *James* in discourse with an English Bishop, is reported to have rendred this account why so few Heresies and Errours of Doctrine are united and prosecuted to the publick disturbance of that Church. [Every Parish hath their Pastor ever present with them, and watching over them, and he with his Elders and Deacons hath a weekly meeting for censure of manners, by which he perfectly knows his Flock, and every aberration of them in doctrine & practise; and lest any heresie might seize upon the Pastor, they have their Presbyters, which meet together once also every week in the next chief Town or Citie; and there they have their exercise of prophesying, after which the Moderator asks the judgement of all the Pastors concerning the doctrine then delivered, or of any other doubtful point then propounded; and if the *Presbytery* be divided in their opinions, the question is, under an enjoyned silence, put over to the next Synod, which is held twice a year, unto which all the Pastors of that quarter

quarter or province do duly resort, accompanied with their Elders; and any question of doubt is either decided by that Assembly, or with charge of silence reserved to a national Synod which they hold every year once, whither come not the *Pastors* onely, but the King himself, or his Commissioners, and some of all orders and degrees, sufficiently authorized for determining of any controverſie that ſhall ariſe among them.] Could the Bishops in former times procure a greater unity in the Church of *England*? Whence therefore ſhould this charge ariſe? peradventure ſome *Presbyterians* have turned *Sectaries*. Surely it would be taken for a weak arguing, to ſay, That *Prelacy* is the way to Popery, becauſe ſome *Prelatiſts* have turned *Papiſts*.

The truth is, *Sectarianiſm* grew up in a Myſtery of Iniquity and State policy, and it was not well diſcerned, till it became almoſt triumphant by Military ſucceſſes. But after that its growth and ſtrength did manifeſtly appear, *Presbytery* began to ſtruggle with it, and ſo

continued, until by the power of the Army it was inforced to sit down, but never to comply. Whereupon the tongues and pens of Sectaries were imployed against none more then the Presbyterians. And I should be glad to hear of such bitter Invectives of the *Papists* against the *Prelatists*; not that I rejoyce in the sin of the one, or the suffering of the other; but that the *Protestant* friends of *Prelacy* might more incline to their *Protestant Presbyterian* Brethren. Surely the way to prevent the growth of the two utmost extreames, is, for the two middle parties to draw up and close together. But however the world goes, the *Presbyterians* shall ever keep as good a distance from the Sectaries or Fanaticks, as the *Prelatists* shall from *Papists*. And verily there is no greater bar against Fanaticism then the right *Presbyterian* principles; as not to sever but joyn the written word and spirit for direction; the spirit and use of Ordinances for Edification; to erect a stated Church-Order and Discipline;

to allow to the Church a directive, and to every Christian a discretive judgment; to insist only upon Divine Scripture Warrant, and to wave humane authority in matters of Religion: For such is the temperament of these Maxims, that they commend and require a distinct knowledge and illumination in the mind, and in the affections lively motions and stirrings against Formality and blind Devotion; and so do satisfy the minds of those, who conceive that in true Religion there is spiritual light, and life and power; and also they shew the necessity of the written Word, of constant publick Ordinances, and private Exercises of Religion, and of the direction and discipline of the Church; all which do serve to settle the mind against dilusive impulses, and wild fancies and raptures.

Section XVIII.

But of all the prejudices and scandals taken against this way, there is none greater then this, that it is represented as tyrannical and domineering, and that
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those who live under it must like *issachar* crouch under the burdens. In the first place let us rightly understand the meaning of this prejudice. Is it because this Discipline doth censure scandalous disorders, and enquire into the state of the flock, as watching over their souls? This is its high commendation in the sight of God and good men. Doth Episcopacy care for none of these things? Surely a Bishop is an Overseer; to exercise the Office of a Bishop is to take the oversight of the Church; and those that are over us in the Lord watch for our souls, as those that must give an account thereof. Howbeit Presbytery is not more severe in censuring the breach of Gods Commandments, then the Hierarchy in censuring the breach of their own constitutions. Or is the offence taken upon pretence that *Presbyterians* affect and arrogate an arbitrary power, would rule by faction, and exercise a rigout to the stirring up of animosities and unquiet humours? Since the friends of *Prelacy* are loudest in this crimination, I crave leave
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to use this mild retortion. Is there no appearance of domination in *Prelacy*? Was nothing like unto it objected to the dignified Clergy? If you say those invectives and clamours were false and scandalous, then let reason and charity be permitted to make some Apologie for the other discipline which the Nation hath hitherto never experienced in any measure of national uniformity and settlement. But there are remedies at hand to prevent the abuse of any Government that is of it self lawful and laudable. Certainly the wisdom of the King and Parliament, with the advice of grave Divines, may prescribe sure and certain rules of discipline. Moreover, to cut off all occasion, and prevent all appearance of domineering, all political coercive jurisdiction in matter of Religion, may be withheld (if need require) from Ecclesiastical persons; and that meer spiritual power alone which is inseparably to their office, may be left to their management, which is in the Name of Christ, and by Authority from him, to admonish the unruly; and
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if they continue obstinate, by the same Authority to declare them unworthy of Church-Communion, and Christian Society, and to require the Lords people to have no fellowship with them, that they may be afflicted and humbled: And because spiritual censures appertaining only to the Conscience may be too little regarded, when no temporal dammage is annexed to them, there may be a collateral civil power always present in Ecclesiastical Meetings, to take cognizance of all Causes therein debated and adjudged, in order to temporal penalties.

Vpon the whole matter aforegoing we firmly build this position, *That the Presbyterian Party ought not in Justice or Reason of State to be rejected and depressed, but ought to be protected and encouraged.* Nevertheless there being a seeming complication in this business, and an other ample party appearing in competition, a difficultie remains, and the matter falls into a further deliberation. And thereupon we are fallen upon the second main Enquiry.

II Qu. *Whether the Presbyterian Party may be protected and encouraged, and the Episcopal not deserted nor disoblged.*

Section XIX.

The grand Expedient in this difficulty is a well grounded Accomodation producing an intire and firm union. That the Accommodation may be true and solid, not loose and hollow, it must be such as will content and satisfie for continuance; and that it may be such, the terms thereof must not be repugnant to the conscientious principles of either party. Otherwise whatsoever it be, it is but a botch, and will never hold. Wherefore we now examine whether those principles are such as set the parties at an irreconcilable distance, or else make the proposed union possible and hopeful. As touching holy Doctrine, they both receive the nine and thirty Articles of the Church of *England*, unless that one side may demurr upon one or
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two passages respecting the Form of Ecclesiastical Government and Ceremonies, being the matters now in question, and remote from the foundation. And in very deed the Doctrine of the English Bishops, in general, that lived in the elder times of Protestantism, as *Jewel, Pilkington, Babington*, and of the latter Bishops their Followers, as *Abbot, Carleton, Morton, Usher, Hall, Davenant*, is intirely imbraced by the Presbyterians; when as many of the latter *Prelatists* departed from it, in the great point of Predestination, Redemption, Free-will, effectual Grace, Perseverance, and Assurance of Salvation, and termed it *Puritan Doctrine*. Whereupon I conclude that those *Prelatists* of this Age, who are the genuine Offspring of the old Episcopal Divines, will not divide from *Presbyterians* upon the account of Doctrine; and that the other sort need not divide from them any more then from the rest, that are of the Episcopal Perswasion. But in the Form of Church Government the breach is much wider, and the Reconciliation

liation seems more difficult. Indeed the Dominion of *Prelacy*, and the exact *Presbyterian* parity are opposite Extreams. Nevertheless, a regulated *Episcopacy* and *Presbytery* may be found so far from mutual opposition and inconsistency, that they may close together in a sweet Harmony. The Scripture Bishop and the Evangelical Pastor is one and the same Officer. The Primitive Ecclesiastical Episcopacy was not reputed by the Antients a different Order of Ministry. The Bishop was only a Presbyter in a higher degree, the President of the Presbytery, and ruled in consociation with all the Presbyters. The better part of the School-men place the difference only in degree, not in order. Of the same judgement were the old Episcopal Divines in *England*, and even in the last times *Morton*, *Hall*, and *Usher*. Whereupon they held the Forreign Protestant Churches that had no Prelates to be true Churches, and their Pastors true Ministers of Christ. And this is very remarkable in the most rigid Prelatists of
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their times, when upon the new erecting of *Prelacy in Scotland*, certain Scottish Bishops were to be consecrated here in *England*, Bishop *Andrews* moved this question, whether they ought not first to be ordained Presbyters, as having received no Ordination from a Bishop; Arch-Bishop *Bancroft* being there present, maintained there was no necessity of Re-ordination; for where a Bishop cannot be had, Ordination given by Presbyters must be esteemed lawful. This Solution being applauded by the other Bishops, Doctor *Andrews* acquiesced. On the other side, an absolute equality among Ministers is not essential to Presbytery: but a prudential priority according to the Churches occasions, and consequently a stated Presidency may be admitted: For the main principle of Presbytery is this, That every Minister is truly a Pastor, and that pastoral Authority includes both teaching and ruling; for which cause the *Presbyters* may not yield up themselves as the Bishops meer Curates or Subjects. For that would nullifie their

Pastoral

Pastoral Office, as to one part thereof, which is as essential to it as the other; in regard whereof the Presbyters are in Scripture called *Bishops* or *Overseers*, and are charged to take the oversight of the Flock. But this is no way violated by admitting a stated Moderator or president Bishop. As concerning Worship or Divine Service, we conclude that those who agree in the Doctrine of Faith cannot disagree in the substance of Worship. They differ only about the Liturgy and Ceremonies. And the dissenting side oppose not all Liturgy, but desire that the present form may be changed or reformed. They oppose not any circumstance of Decency and Order, but desire that mystical Ceremonies of humane institution may be abolished or not enjoyed.

Section XX.

Thus the Coalition of these two Interests into one appeareth possible, because their conscientious principles on both sides have not that repugnancy, but that they may well close together in a due

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temperament, and constitute one solid Ecclesiastical politic. And nothing hinders this conjunction, but the obstinacy either of one or both parties from a humour of opposition, or incurable enmity, or some carnal designe. Among the Bishops and Episcopal Doctors, some of the most eminent have witnessed to the world their desires of Accommodation by their endeavours and proposals that way. The Presbyterians preferre an uniting accommodation, though upon yielding terms, before division with an intire Toleration. The incomparable Bishop *Usher* in the beginning of the late Troubles proposed his model, Intituled, *The Reduction of Episcopacy unto the form of Synodical Government received in the ancient Church, as an expedient for the compromising of the now differences*, thus declaring, [*That by Order of the Church of England all Presbyters are charged to minister the Doctrine, Sacraments, and Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Realm hath received the same. And that they might the better understand*

derstand what the Lord hath commanded therein, the Exhortation of St. Paul to the Elders of the Church of Ephesus is appointed to be read unto them at the time of their Ordination, Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to rule the Congregation of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.] Mark well how this pious learned Prelate declares his own sence, and interprets the meaning of the Church of England, that the Holy Ghost hath made all Ordained Ministers Bishops or Overseers, to rule the Congregation of God. He saith further, [Though in our Church this kinde of Presbyterial Government hath been long dis-used, yet seeing it still professeth that every Pastor hath a right to rule the Church, and to minister the Discipline of Christ, as well as to dispense the Doctrine and Sacraments: And the restraint of the exercise of this Right proceeds onely from the custom now received in this Realm; no man can doubt but by another Law of the Land this hinderance may be well removed.]

ved.] If the Presbyterians imbrace these or such like Proposals, what hinders the agreement in that great and most difficult point in difference (to wit) *Church-Government?*

Section XXI.

If both parties refuse to meet each other and to walk together in a middle way, the weaker party must needs be tolerated. There is indeed a third way, by subverting the rejected side; but we believe, that in the present case it is so abhorrent to humane reason and Christian Charity, that we will not take it into consideration. Wherefore the Question lies between an Accommodation and a Toleration, which of these two shall be chosen; and why the former is more desirable for both sides then the latter, I offer these arguments: And first, Multiformity of Religion publickly professed doth not well comport with the spirit of this Nation, which is free, eager, zealous, apt to animosities and jealousies, besides that it hath ever had a strong propension to Uniformity. Also, it is too well

well known, that the dividing of Church communion is the dividing of hearts, and that we shall not live like brethren, till we agree to walk in one way. Only let this be well observed and ever remembered, that the necessary and enjoined terms of this Unity be not in things superfluous, but necessary at least for edification, order and peace. Moreover, Toleration being not the daughter of Amity but of Enmity (at least) in some degree, supposeth the party tolerated to be a burden, especially if conceived dangerous to the way established, and commonly holds no longer then meer necessity compels; and consequently neither party take themselves to be safe, the one alwaies fearing to lose its authority, and the other its liberty. And if men will lay aside self-conceit and fond indulgence to the way of their own perswasion, they will quickly finde, that the temper of this Kingdom doth not well accord with extreame on either hand. Certainly, well-minded and serious people were never better prepared for an equall Ac-

commodation. They are weary of tedious dissensions in Church and State, and have seen & felt the sad consequences thereof; and could they once attain to settled union, upon the same grounds they would do their utmost to hold and keep it inviolable. Without controversy, the earnest thoughts of such a composition did expedite the peaceable return of his Majesty. The Presbyterians vigorously acted for it; although they knew there were some that breathed out revenge and cruelty against them, yet they hoped that the prevailing part would be sober, and carry it with all moderation. But they relied chiefly upon his Majesty's Wisdom, Equity and Goodness, whose Virtues (attested by faithful witnesses) proclaimed him the Sovereign Reconciler and Healer of our breaches. And surely they will never repent of their honesty and loyalty. And let them rest assured, that their moderation shall plead for them in the time to come.

Section XXII.

If one party coming forward to meet
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their brethren make a tender of such propositions, as in all reason may procure unity and order in the Church, and cannot pass further without regret of Conscience; in this case, for the other party to go about to strain them higher, is most unreasonable and uncharitable. Let them remember his Rule who is Lord and Head of the Church; *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye the same unto them.* Now such proposals may suffice for peace, which will not satisfie humour, and faction, and carnal interest. Unity and order may be obtained by those terms that do not prejudice the conscientious principles of either party, and are not defective in things necessary; I mean, not onely to salvation, but to the Churches peace and edification; and verily to insist upon such terms alone, is the most Christian and most rational way to a solid and sure peace. As for the Presbyterians, what they offer will sufficiently attain the said ends; and what they stand upon doth not cross the said rule of Charity and Prudence.

dence. Their propofals touching Prelacy, Liturgy, Ceremonies, and Canonical Subscription are in no wife repugnant to the Church's being or well-being.

Section XXIII.

That Prelacy, as it stood in *England*, is not effential to a Church-State, we call to witness the far greater number of Protestant Episcopal Divines, yea the whole current of them, till the times next fore-going our Civil wars. Archbishop *Bancroft*, no way indulgent to Presbytery, withstood the re-ordaining of those Scottish Presbyters elect Bishops upon this reason, That they might not seem to question the Ministry of the Retormed Churches. For which cause, who can forbear to censure the palpable absurdity of some latter Prelatists, that unchurch all the forreign Reformed Churches, and nullifie their Ministry and Ordinances? They have taken up a most destructive killing opinion, which (to the unspeakable advantage of the *Re-wish* Church) lets out the Vitals of the Protestant

Protestant Cause and Religion. And shall any that are hearty Protestants be fond of such Opinionists? Moreover, it is no less evident that the Prelacy, as it stood in *England*, is without the warrant of Divine right, and that not only in regard of Lordly titles and exercise of temporal Dominion, but also in regard of sole Jurisdiction and deputation of power. Is there any text in the Scripture where the name and work of a Bishop is appropriated to a superior Order or degree in the Ministry? Do not all the texts of Scripture that mention the name and work of a Bishop attribute both to all ordained Ministers? Can there be a clearer evidence that a Bishop and Presbyter is the same spirituall Officer? Besides, to maintain the Divine right of Prelacy, it sufficeth not to shew from Scripture any kinde of difference between a Bishop and a Presbyter, unless it can be likewise proved that the Bishop is the alone subject or receptacle of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, that he alone hath rule and government over all the
Presby-

Presbyters within his limits, yea, and over all the Churches, leaving no power to the Presbyters but to execute his Injunctions. But there is nothing more express, then that the Holy Ghost hath made all Presbyters to be Bishops or Overseers, and hath commanded them to rule the Church, and to exercise Episcopacy, or to take the oversight thereof. And that this is the sence of the Church of *England* is manifest by appointing the exhortation of Saint *Paul* to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus*, and the character and qualification of Bishops written by the same Apostle unto *Timothy*, to be read unto Presbyters at the time of their Ordination. Hereupon a late famous Defender of Prelacy was driven to leave the beaten path of Episcopal Divines, and to take a new way, but to the ruine of the Cause maintained by him. He saith [*That although the Title of Πρεσβύτεροι Elders, hath been extended to a second Order in the Church, and is now in use onely for them under the name of Presbyters, yet in the Scripture times it belonged*

belonged principally, if not only, to Bishops, there being no evidence that any of that second Order were then instituted, though soon after, before the Writings of Ignatius, such were instituted in all Churches.] Here it is fully granted that the Scripture Presbyters were Bishops, and that the second Order of meer Presbyters, which were no Bishops, was not then instituted; whereupon it follows, that a meer Presbyter, who is no Bishop, is not of divine institution, but a meer humane Creature, if the holy Scriptures be the perfect Rule of all Divine Institutions. Neither is the abatement of Prelacy unto moderate Episcopacy or Presidency any departure from the practice of the ancient Church, but a true reviving of the same, which was an election made by the Presbyters of one of their own number to preside amongst them, and that upon no pretence of Divine Right, but for remedy of Schism, as Jerome witnesseth. And with this Bishop or President the whole Presbytery joyned in the common Government of the Church.

Bishop

Bishop *Usher* plainly shews how easily the ancient form of Government may be revived again, and with what little shew of alteration, namely, by erecting a Suffragan Bishop in every rural Deanery, into which every Diocess is subdivided, who may every moneth assemble a Synod of all the incumbent Pastors within the Precinct, and according to the major part of voices, conclude all matters that should be brought into debate before them, yet with a liberty to appeal (if need require) to the Diocesan, Provincial, National Synods. That the number of Bishops should be very much augmented doth evidently appear to all that know and consider the weight of Episcopal Superintendency; and the learned Bishop now mentioned gives a hint, that their number might be very well conformed to the number of rural Deaneries. Surely so many hundred populous Parishes now under the Government of one Bishop might be well divided into many Diocesses ample enough. And such a course would make
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not only for the edifying of the Church by the more effectual inspection of many Bishops for one, but also for the advancement of Learning by the multiplication of preferments. Wherefore nothing of the Churches being or well-being, nothing of Divine Institution or primitive practise doth withstand the reduction of Prelacy to moderate Episcopacy, or the ancient Synodical government, to which the Presbyterians may conform without repugnancy to their principles.

Section XXIV.

The point of Ceremonies comes next under debate. And for as much as it concerns Divine Worship, it is of high importance, and a tender point of Conscience. And herein we affirm, that the Presbyterian concessions are no way defective, but sufficient and ample unto all regular devotion in divine Service. All natural expressions of devotion, or natural external worship they readily acknowledge, as kneeling and lifting up of the hands and eyes in prayer, and such like; which are called natural, because
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nature it self teacheth all Nations to use them without any divine or humane Institution, and a rational man by the meer light of nature is directed to them, yet not without some government of counsel and discretion: For in these things nature is in part determined and limited by the custome of several Ages and Countries, and by the difference of several Cases. In the act of adoration the prostration of the body is used according to nature in some ages, places, and occasions, and not in others. In ancient times the wearing of sackcloth and ashes, and renting of clothes, were fit expressions of humiliation, and that according to nature; yet the same suits not with our times: For herein nature is subject unto some variety; and now a-days the wearing of the meanest apparel were futable in a day of Humiliation, because it is now a convenient natural expression of self-abasement, and a kind of abstinence. Likewise kneeling is a natural prayer-posture; but where it cannot be used conveniently, standing is naturally

turally agreeable; nevertheless neither the one nor the other is necessary, where infirmity or other necessity makes it inconvenient. Moreover they do not scruple the meer circumstances of order, as time, place, and method, without which humane actions cannot be performed. They allow and commend all matters of decency, as decent Churches or meeting places, and furniture, as a Pulpit Cloth, Communion Cup, and a grave habit for a Minister, and in holy duties a grave posture of body & composed countenance, and the wearing of the best apparel upon solemn sacred times; all which are recommended in the general Rule, *Let all things be done decently and in order*: Which Rule properly is of the Law of nature, and would oblige Christians, though it had not been written in the holy Scripture.

In the things before mentioned we perceive a good accord; but here lies the difference.

The Presbyterians stick at Ceremonies properly sacred, and significant by humane institution, which they conceive to
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be more than meer circumstances, even parts of Worship; and whatsoever instituted Worship is not ordained of God they hold unlawful. To the making up of the Ceremonies now in question, they observe these things; Humane Institution, mystical and instituted, not natural signification, and appropriation to divine Worship. And it alters not the case, that they are by nature apt to signify (for so are all Sacraments) if they do not actually signify without institution. That such Ceremonies are parts of divine Worship, they prove from the nature of Worship in general, which requires no more, then that it hath the honour of God for its direct and immediate end; it is something not reductively, but directly sacred and religious, and an immediate expression of our observance of God, and obligation to him. And such is the nature of the controverted Ceremonies, much differing from matters of order and decency; which properly and immediately respect men that use them, as the Church

Church or Temple is immediately and directly for the assembling of people, a Communion Cup for drinking, a Table cloth for covering. Decency is no part of Worship, but a circumstance thereof not proper to it, but common, with grave civil actions; and doth no more become sacred, when applyed to sacred uses, than a sacred thing (as prayer) becomes civil, when applyed to civil uses. Time considered as a meer circumstance of a sacred action, belongs to it not precisely as sacred, but as an action, because without time no action can be performed. And being a meer circumstance, it needs not be determined of God, but is left to humane prudence according to occasion, whether for private or publick Worship; which is the case of time for private devotion, and dayes of publick Humiliation and Thanksgiving. But they that scruple our mystical significant Ceremonies, conceive that they are properly and meerly sacred, as having the honour of God for their direct and immediate end, That the Surplice is not for gravi-

ty, nor meerly for decent distinction, but a religious mystical habit, the character or badge of a sacred Office, or Service conformable to the linen Ephod under the Law. The signing with the signe of the Cross (they conceive) is more evidently sacred than the former. As Baptism consecrates the Child, so doth the Cross. It is used as a sealing sign of our Obligation to Christ, as the words used in the application thereof do manifest, and the book of Canons doth declare expressly, which saith. [*That it is an honorable badge, whereby the Infant is dedicated to the service of him that died on the Cross, as by the words used in the Book of Common Prayer it may appear.*] And therefore it is in that respect Sacramental. Besides, if it were not a sealing sign, but only for mystical teaching, it hath the same nature with divers Levitical Ceremonies, which were not typical, but doctrinal, teaching some Moral Duty. A holy day, or time properly sacred, whether by divine institution, as the *Lords day*, or humane, as other sacred Festivals, is not a
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meer circumstance, but a part of Worship: For it is not only belonging to a sacred action, as an action, but precisely as a sacred action on that day to be performed; yea, it is of it self sacred, and is not only sanctified by the Service, but also sanctifieth the Service. The truth is, sacred Ceremonies may in some respect be called circumstances, as being inferiour things subservient to Moral Worship, which is the main; yet they are also parts of Worship in general, for Worship is either Moral or Ceremonial; and that Ceremonial Worship which is commanded of God is lawful and good; but that which is not commanded by him is neither good nor lawful, nevertheless it is Worship. On this manner the *Non-Conformists* and *Presbyterians* have debated this Controversie, and argue further, That humane discretion is the rule of Order and Method; Nature and civil Custom is the rule of Decency, but only Scripture is the rule of instituted Worship, wherein both addition and diminution is alike forbidden. It the

Englſh Ceremonies be warrantably used, what hinders the use of divers other Ceremonies used in the Roman Church? Is it said their multitude will become burthenſom and inconvenient? But who can determine the convenient number? And however, an exchange of one Ceremony for another were not unlawful. For what reason may not some other Romish Rites in Baptism be used as well as the Cross, seeing they are nothing less significant or inoffensive, nay peradventure much more inoffensive, because the Papists by giving divine Worship to the Cross have abused it to gross Idolatry. We take this to be sound speech or discourse, that cannot be gainsaid. And surely those of temperate spirits, that are otherwise minded, might well conceive that it hath such probable appearance, as might possibly take with learned and pious men. And seeing the one Side allow and commend all natural external Worship, and all matters of Decency and Order, and desire to be spared in mystical Ceremonies of humane institution,

tution, the other Side should not in reason or charity insist on the said Ceremonies, as the terms of Church communion and priviledges, and of Christian unity and amity.

Section XX V.

As concerning the Lurgy, the Presbyterians do not gain-say the lawfulness of a stinted form of Prayer; in as much as the observing either of a Form or a Directory is not of the substance of prayer, but an accident or circumstance belonging to it, and left to humane determination. It is further granted by them, that in some parts of publick worship a form is ordinarily necessary; as in the Sacramental actions, in the act of Baptizing, and of consecrating and delivering the Lords Supper. And herein will be no dis-harmony, because they are Scripture forms. Likewise in such parts of Divine Service where it is not necessary, they can submit unto it for the Churches peace: Nevertheless they are not satisfied in the present Litu gy, but desire it may be laid aside, or much re-

formed. And what solid reason withstands the equity of this desire? Moderate Prelatists have acknowledged considerable imperfections in the Book of Common-Prayer, and Bishop *Usher* hath collected sundry particulars in his direction concerning the same presented to the House of Commons upon their request. Let sober judgments consider, whether this or that form of prayer be of the substance of that sacred exercise, or only its outward shape and dress. If it were of the substance of Religious Worship, it would require Divine Institution to make it lawful, as do other parts of instituted Worship. If it be only an outward shape and dress left to humane prudence, it is variable according to the difference of times. Whosoever observes impartially shall find that Political Prudence was joyned with Christian Piety in composing the English Service Book. In the beginning of Reformation the wisdom of the State so ordered, that so great a change might be made with as little noise as was possible,

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and with regard to what the Nation would bear. Accordingly when a Rebellion was raised in *Coruwal*, and *Devonshire*, about the change of Religion, King *Edward* to appease the matter told the people, That it was no other then the old Service in the English Tongue. Likewise when this form was revived by Queen *Elizabeth*, one might conjecture, that care was taken, that no passage offensive, even to the Papists, might remain therein; for we find an alteration in the Letany very material. Whereas King *Edwards* books ran thus, [*From all sedition and privy conspiracy, from the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, from all false Doctrine and Heresie.*] These words [*From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities*] were left out in Queen *Elizabeths* time, and ever since. Whereupon the Papists throughout this Kingdom resorted to our Divine Service for the first ten years of that Queens Reign. And this came to pass also by the Popes connivance, who was not

then in despaire of reducing *England* by fair means. But sithence *Papists* have been Recusants. Wherefore if forms be variable, according to the difference of times, and the present Liturgy was compiled with respect to the peace of former times, and the reconciling of *Papists* to Protestants, but is now become by change of times, an occasion of dividing Protestants from each other, without hope of regaining *Papists*: Can Religion or Reason plead for the rigorous imposing of it (especially without very much emendation) upon godly peaceable Ministers and people that dare not use it throughout? Doth the Life and Soul of Religion lye in the Common-Prayer? Is it as ancient as Christianity, yea, or of equal extent with the Protestant Reformation? Whence is it then that many will have no communion with those that do not use it, or would cast out of the Church those that cannot use it throughout, who nevertheless in all necessary parts of worship are conformable to Protestant Doctrine and practice

practice? Is that efficacy or excellency in it, that the laying it aside would much impair and weaken Religion, and darken its glory? Let it be then examined, whether it hath made the comers thereunto more perfect than others, more knowing in Religion, more pious and blameless in their conversation than those that frequent it not. Let experience come forth and witness; which (if constant and universal) is the best proof of the efficacy or imbecillity of any institution. Suppose a Liturgy were framed of Confessions, Petitions, and Thanksgivings, wholly collected out of Sacred Scripture, both for matter and expressions, would it be inferiour to that which is now in question? Doubtless such a form would be a happy expedient to put an end to this controversy.

Section XXVI.

Canonical subscription lately imposed is a yoke of bondage, to be considered by all those that have a true regard to such liberty in Religion, as equity and necessity pleads for. Blessed be God
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who hath put it into the Kings heart to extend compassion to a multitude of his faithful Subjects, and to remove this yoke; let not this or the like be laid on their necks any more. The Canon requires a subscribing to the thirty nine Articles, to the Common-Prayer Book, to the book of ordering Bishops, Priests and Deacons; that all these contain in them nothing contrary to the Word of God. This is unreasonable, unprofitable, and unnecessary. It is unreasonable; for were it just and reasonable, it must suppose not only perfect verity throughout the whole, without any mixture of error; but also either a spirit of infallibility in the composers of those books, or the like measure of judgment and persuasion in all Orthodox and pious Ministers, concerning all particulars in so large a volume, written by men subject to error. That there is not perfect Verity without mixture, or grounded suspicion of error, there is real evidence. To assert a spirit of infallibility in the composers thereof, is not consonant to Protestant

stant principles. To suppose the like measure of faith and judgement in all Orthodox godly Ministers concerning fallible writings is absurd; and to rack men unto it, is an imitation of that Tyrant, that would stretch miserable creatures unto the length of that bed of torment upon which he laid them. It is also unprofitable: For these forced large subscriptions are known to be no sure hold-fast of the multitude drawn into them, whereof many come hand over head, meerly as to an enjoyned form; others more considerate do it in their own sence. And indeed the best service which this Injunction doth, is to lye as a bar to exclude the more deliberate sort, or as a clog to oppress their consciences. If to remedy this evil you allow men to use their own limitations and explanations, the business it self is insignificant. If to satisfy several parties, you pen the Doctrines and Forms in ambiguous terms, the swaying part of the Church will draw them to their own peculiar sence, and establish their own opinions,

to the crushing of dissenters ; as by the potency of some Prelates, Arminianism was asserted for the Doctrine of the Church of *England*.

Lastly, it is unnecessary, for we suppose the benefits pretended by it are unity in Doctrine & uniformity in Practice ; both which may be as well attained and far more kindly, without this enforced Subscription, if no Minister be suffered to preach or write any thing contrary to the established Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline, nor ordinarily for the main to neglect the established Rule. But what inconvenience, if in things of lesser weight, a latitude were allowed ? A little variety indulged in some particles, is no impeachment of Uniformity, but rather an establishment thereof with contentment and tranquility. Contrariwise, as the wringing of the Nose draws forth blood ; so over-straining and rigid injunctions distemper the mindes of men otherwise peaceable, and stir up strife.

Section

Section XXVII.

Moreover, the publick state of these differences is such, that the Prelatists may and ought to descend to the Presbyterians in the proposed moderate way; but the Presbyterians cannot come up to the Prelatists in the height of their way. For the Prelates condescension stands only in omission or forbearance of certain things which seem to them lawful and laudable, but the subjection of the Presbyterians stands in subscribing and conforming to certain things which to them seem unlawful: And common equity will soon pass its verdict, that the condescension of the one is far more easie then the subjection of the other. Bishop *Davenant* in his *Determinations* resolves in one question, that a Protestant may not with a safe conscience be present at the Popish Mass, because he wounds his conscience by impious dissimulation, thereby making a shew of approving that pretended expiatory sacrifice. In another Question he resolves, That Papists are bound to be present at the English Divine Service, because

because nothing occurs therein, that can be by themselves reprov'd. In applying this to our case, it is far from my thoughts to make the comparison between *Presbyterians* and *Prelatists* parallel with that between *Protestants* and *Papists*; but I make the reason of both cases parallel: for as *Papists* find nothing in the *Protestant* Liturgy (according to their own principles) impious or unsound; in like manner the *Prelatists* can find no positive thing in the propounded terms of accommodation, contrary to divine right and primitive practice; only as the *Papists* find not so much as they would have in our Liturgy, so the *Prelatists* in the said proposals: Nay, the *Papists* have better colour of reason to separate from our publique Service, because, although they find nothing positively unsound, yet according to the Roman Faith they may pretend fundamental defects therein; as the want of the sacrifice of the Mass: but the *Prelatists* can here alledge no such thing; the supposed defects and omissions being only in things remote from the foundation

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foundation of Faith and Religion. For we trust the greater number of them do not hold, that there is no Church without a *Prelate* having sole jurisdiction over the Clergy; That there is no Ministry but what is ordained by such a *Prelate*; That there is no true divine Service, where the Common-Prayer Book is not used; and that there is no acceptable worship, without humane mystical Ceremonies. Let them that have taken up such opinions sadly consider whether they are led therein by conscience, or by humour and designe.

Section XXVIII.

The greatest shew of reason opposing this moderation is a pretended fixation in Religion; and indeed it is but a shew and colour. That Religion is a thing unmovable, all that be truly religious do from the heart acknowledge; and for the immobility thereof, none contend more earnestly then the *Presbyterians*. But they fix its unmovable state in the Canonical Scripture, and they continually cry to the Law and to the Testimony, against

gainst humane Traditions and Inventions, in one Extream, and against Enthusiasms in the other. Upon occasion of any aberration in Doctrine or practice they recall us to the primitive rule and pattern; and what is received from the Lord, that deliver they to the Churches. That sacred Rule they willingly suffer not to be captivated in its interpretation by the Churches infallibility, as do the Papists; nor by proud and arrogant reason, as the Socinians; nor by impulse and imagination, as the Euthusiasts: but they maintain it in its full authority to interpret it self, whose authentick interpretation we are inabled to discern by rational inferences and deductions, wherein we make use of reason not as an argument, but as an instrument.

As for the Decrees and Canons of the Church, what rightful Authority doth make them as the Law of the Medes and Persians that altereth not? Must things be enacted by the Church once and for ever? And whether they be little or great, clear or doubtful, necessary or

or superfluous, must they be held unquestionable and indisputable? Surely this is to Idolize humane Constitutions, and to equalize them with Divine; and to lead the people to a blind impieite faith, and a neglect of searching the Scriptures. And upon this ground those large Churches, as the Roman, Grecian, Æthiopick, Armenian, Indian, and the rest, are obstinately divided for many ages from each other; and holding to this principle of unalterable Traditions and Constitutions, they will be divided to the end of the world. Had not all Ecclesiastical Canons and Decrees a beginning, and that at sundry times, and in divers manners? And are not many of them as it were but of yesterday? And when they were brought in, where was the pretended fixation? Doubtless Religion may be alike altered by Addition as by Substraction. Nay, Hath there not been Substraction also? Are not divers Customs and Ceremonies of great antiquity now quite abolished among us? If the Church of *Rome* may erre, why not the Church of

H England?

England? Indeed the *Papists* that hold their Church infallible, may hold the Decrees thereof unalterable, but the Church of *England* claims no such privilege. Was it necessary that our first Reformers should see all things at the first day-break out of the night of Popery? Or if they saw all things requisite for their own times, could they foresee all future events, and provide remedies for inconveniencies which time might bring forth: It is a wise saying of a learned man, *That time it self is the greatest Innovator*; and again, *That Physick is an Innovation*. Surely as the naturall, so the body politick, sometimes needs physick, and oftentimes moderate Reformations do prevent abolitions and extirpations. Besides, a great alteration in this kind hath continued in a stated posture for many years, which inferres a greater necessity of an accommodation. Nevertheless there is no attempt or question made of changing any thing, that toucheth sound faith, and good life, or the substance of divine worship. Yet
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in the Doctrine of the Church something possibly may have been inserted as an Article of Faith, which is but problematical; and in a fundamental Article some inconvenient expression may be used, and this questionless may be altered without any imputation of uncertainty to the established Doctrine. Some change in the outward Form and Ceremonies, which are but a garb or dress, is no real change of the Worship: some change in the late external jurisdiction of the Church, which was not formally Ecclesiastical and spiritual, but temporal and coercive, invested in the Bishops by the Law of the Land, is no change in the true spiritual power, that is intrinsic to their spiritual office. Nay, the reformation may be encompassed with little variation, as to the outward model and platform, the Kingdom being already squared for it, as hath been above shewed in the offers made by some Bishops. Only the power will be more diffused, being distributed among Bishops and Presbyters in due proportion. Is it ob-

jected; once remove the ancient bounds, and we know not where to stop, we must serve every humour, and an inundation of error and Schism will break in. Surely Papists have as much to say herein against the Protestants, as the Prelatists against the Presbyterians. For they say, that Protestantism is the womb of all Sects, and that we having forsaken the infallible Guide, the Church of *Rome*, have lost our selves in a Wilderness of error: besides, who were they that removed the ancient bounds set in the first English Reformation, by introducing many innovations? but to give a direct answer, are not the sacred Scriptures, and Christs holy Institutions, sufficient bounds and land-marks? Cannot prudent and faithful Church-guides keep the flock from wandring, unless they hedge them in by unchangeable Canons, even for meer formalities? In the late distempered times, the Sectaries and masked Jesuites had a free rainge, and all possible advantages, yet it is manifest, that towards the later end, error
was

was rather in the wane than in the increase, which we are bold to attribute to the liberty of constant practical preaching. Wherefore settle discipline, encourage true Watchmen, restrain seducers, expel the Jesuites, and the Church through Gods blessing will be kept in peace and order.

Section XXIX.

If these things are so, whence proceeds the present vehemence and importunity of so many of the Episcopal party, to carry things to the height of their way, without the least abatement of the ancient rigour. Some of that way, as wise and learned, and pious, as many among them, did offer terms in the time of their distraction and distress; and in those times it was a common thing among the friends of Prelacy, to condemn the violence of some of the late Prelates. Have present advantages made them of another minde? If they answer by retortion, Why did not the Presbyterians make a more early offer of agreement; and close, when time was, with the over-

cures of some Bishops ? Truly we are willing to argue the case, and have many things to reply. And first it is freely acknowledged, that we ought to have had a more tender respect to each other, to have better considered the state of *England*, and to have studied moderation. Yet let not one side bear all the blame, when both are faulty. Impetuous actions on both sides suddenly brought us to extremities, and a War brake forth, and then both Prelatists and Presbyterians were engaged with such partakers, that the more moderate on both sides must needs be overacted. And as the War was prolonged, the breach was widened, Statesmen, and Swordmen, and particular subdividing interests having their peculiar and hidden designs. Moreover, when the Regal Power, and the House of Peers were suppressed, and most of the House of Commons secluded, the Presbyterians had only an interest of liberty, but not of power, and authority, and favour. You cannot impute to them the want

of

of unity, which was not possible for them to encompass. But they were heartily weary of those confusions, and longed for unity and order, and had much regard to Bishop *Ushers* reduction then reprinted, desiring to take it for a ground-work, or beginning of accommodation among all sober Protestants, that we might not be spoiled of all Religion, but what Papists and Sectaries would by their leaves allow us. So that not of constraint, but of choice and a ready mind, they pursue peace and concord. Howbeit, in those times some Prelatists of the higher strain would condescend in nothing, but gloried in calling themselves the unchangeable Sons of the Church of *England*, that is, in their sence, the unalterable Asserters of the Opinions and practices of the late English Hierarchy. There were also many more moderate Episcopal Divines, that were formerly reckoned half Puritans, and upon that account kept from preferment, till about the beginning of the Long Parliament, some of

them were made Bishops for the support
 of *Episcopacy*. These being exasperated
 by the late Wars, and the issue there-
 of violent changes in Government, and
 their own sufferings, which happened
 beyond our first expectations, were set
 at a greater distance from us. Let both
 sides acknowledge their error in de-
 parting unto such a distance from one a-
 nother. The truth is, men engaged in
 War aim at victory, and having peculiar
 interests, draw to extreams. But now
 we settle upon a common bottom; and
 prudence should guide us to aim at com-
 mon satisfaction. It is known that some
Episcopal and *Presbyterian* Divines
 have joyned hand in hand, and why
 should not all those of either party do
 the like, that are both for Christ? In-
 deed a calamity may befall sound and
 good Christians, to refuse unity in
 Church-order, when the terms mutually
 required seem to one or both parties un-
 lawfull. But in the present case, when
 nothing is desired in contradiction to
 Divine Right, Primitive practice, order
 and

and decency, but a forbearance or indulgence in things not of themselves necessary, yet scrupled as unlawful, and it will not be accepted, surely either secular interest, or the everlasting enmity, is the root of this dissention. And certainly, with those that bear so hard upon mens consciences, conformity to Church government, Rites and Ceremonies, is not sufficient to procure their amity. We well remember how heretofore the conforming Puritanes were as great an eye-sore to some Prelates as the non-conformists. But in good earnest, shall such precious things as the peace and edification of the Church, the needful service of so many able and godly Ministers, and the quiet and comfort of so many sober-minded Christians, be all sacrificed to the Hierarchy and Ceremonies? Will not Episcopal Protestant Divines regard the weakning of the Protestant Cause in Christendom, by treading the Presbyterians under foot? The more ancient Bishops in *England* were of another minde, as Bishop Robert Abbot by name,

name, witness this passage of his Sermon preached, when he was Doctor of the Chair in Oxford [*That men under pretence of truth, and preaching against the Puritans, strike at the heart and root of Faith and Religion now established amongst us; that this preaching against Puritans was but the practice of Parsons and Campians counsel when they came into England to seduce young Students: and when many of them were afraid to lose their places, if they should professedly be thus, the counsel they then gave them was, that they should speak freely against Puritans, and that should suffice.*] Let our Episcopal brethren as Divines, as Protestants, as Christians, consider these things. O let it not be said of this Generation in the time to come, that the way of peace we have not known.

From the Discourse foregoing, I infer this pacifick and healing conclusion, That the Party called *Presbyterian* may be protected and encouraged, and the *Episcopal* not deserted nor disoblged.
His

His *Majesties* wisdom and authority will draw both Sides to submit to reason.

The third Inquiry having connexion with the two former, now follows to close up the whole matter.

Quest. III. Whether the upholding of both Parties by a just and equal accommodation, be not in it self more desirable, and more agreeable to the State of England, than the absolute exalting of one Party, and the total subversion of the other ?

Section XXX.

That state of Prelacy which cannot stand without the subversion of the Presbyterians, and that stands in opposition to regulated Episcopacy, will become a mystery of a meer carnal and worldly state, under a sacred title and venerable name of our Mother the Church. For in such opposition, of what will it be made up, but of Lordly revenue, dignity

ty, splendor, and jurisdiction, with outward ease and pleasure? What will its design be from age to age, but to uphold and advance its own pomp and potency? Read the Ecclesiastical Histories, and you shall finde the great business of the *Hierarchy* hath been to contest with Princes and Nobles, and all ranks and degrees, about their Immunities, Privileges, Pre-eminencies, to multiply Constitutions and Ceremonies for props to their own Greatness, but not to promote the Spiritual Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in the hearts of people, according to the life and power of Christianity. The above-named *Venetian Gentleman*, in his Narrative of the Popes Nuncio, delivers this Maxime. [*That the Court of Rome, in perpetual pursuance of its old pretences, is more solicitous and laborious to reverse and destroy the Oath of Allegiance, because it seems contrary to its temporall grandeur, then to extirpate such Heresies as the Realm of England is infected with.*] Even so such an *Hierarchy* will be more industrious and
care;

careful to establish and enlarge their own Power & Dignity, then to maintain and propagate Christs true Religion. What are the weapons of the Warfare, by which this Mystical State prevails? Not such as are mighty through God, working upon the conscience, but pecuniary Mulcts; and greater temporal penalties; not to the wounding of the spirit, but to the breaking of the outward estate: By what wayes and methods must it be advanced? The constant and practical preaching of the Word must be discountenanced, Snares must be laid for the most zealous Ministers, Sports and pastimes on the Sabbath dayes must be held forth with allowance and approbation, Men of strict lives and serious in Religion must be reproached for Fanaticks. By these means a people being first enthralled to ignorance, superstition and profaneness, will be disposed unto blinde obedience and perfect spiritual bondage. For in very deed, the State here described will never stand safely among a people that are free, serious, searching and discerning

ning in matters of Religion.

For this cause an Hierarchy of this nature hath a strong bias towards Popery: Nay, it must for its own safety approach as near it as the Nation can well bear. The Reformed Religion doth not glory in the vast riches, outward pomp and splendour of Ecclesiastical persons. Wherefore, when the grandeur of Prelates and pomp of Ceremonies is affected and admired, the Church of Rome is sure to finde favour in the eyes of the Clergy. The said *Venetian* reports [*That the Universities, Bishops and Divines of this Realm dayly imbrace Catholick Opinions, though they profess them not with open mouth, for fear of the Puritans.*] In this matter let them stand or fall by the evidence of their own writings. Let it be well observed, that the designs of suppressing Puritans, and complying with Papists in this Nation, had their beginning both at once, and proceeded in equal paces. And it hath appeared, that the moderate *Cassandrian* *Grotian* Popery was no abomination to many Prelatists. The

The Conciliators of our age have judged *Papists* and moderate *Protestants* (as they call them) very reconcileable, but have cast the *Calvinists* or *Puritans* without the limits of the pacification: Wherefore, we cannot conceive that the excessive height of *Prelacy* (I say not this of regulated *Episcopacy*) to be the strongest *Bulwark* against *Popery*, unless by *Popery* is meant no more then what the *Trent* Fathers (except the *Italians*) generally opposed, to wit, the stupendious exorbitant power of the *Pope*, who pretends to be not only *Supream*, but in effect, sole *Bishop* of the *Universe*, as reputing all other *Bishops* his meer subjects and delegates. We confess, *Popery* in this new and strict notion, might be controlled by the height of *Prelacy*. But, according to a vulgar sense, we take *Popery* in the height thereof for the *Heresies* and *Idolatries*; and in the lower degree thereof, for the gross errors and superstitions of the *Church of Rome*.

Section XXXII.

Moreover, pure necessity in that state will constrain the Hierarchy to negotiate with *Rome*, if they subvert and ruine the Presbyterians. If in such a case they intend to uphold a Protestant State, they understand not their own concernment. The Bishops must either retreat to a moderate compliance with Presbyterians, or advance to a reconciliation with Papists. If they had a design to extirpate the Presbyterians, and could accomplish it, are they able afterwards alone and by themselves to bear up against the main force, and to withstand all the wiles and methods of the popish Faction at home and abroad? They mistake themselves, if they think their unalterable adherents are so numerous and powerful. In case they dissipate that other party, which hath been always found most active, vigorous, and vigilant against Romish Encroachments, what remains, besides themselves and their zealots, but a common dronish multitude, that will do little for any religion's

ligion; or men of loose principles, that would easily embrace *Popery* as a flesh-pleasing Religion. When the common people are left to ignorance and prophaneſs for ſervile ends and purpoſes, they are thoroughly prepared for *Popery*, which is a groſs, ſenſual, formal, pompous way, agreeable to the multitude; whereas Fanaticiſm, the other extreme, takes but with a few in compariſon, becauſe it hath ſomething of pretended illuminations, ſpiritual notions and raptures, to which the common multitude is not propenſe. If you aſk how hath *Prelacy* held it out hitherto againſt *Popery*, even from the firſt Reformation; take notice that the *Episcopal* Clergy did not go about to exterminate the *Puritans* before their latter times, and then he that had half an eye could diſcern the notable advance, and the confident expectations of the *Popiſh* faction.

Section XXXII.

Do any perſons conceive a Reconciliation with *Rome* hopeful or poſſible upon moderate terms (as they ſuppoſe)

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namely,

namely, the permission of the marriage of Priests, the *Popes* Dispensation for the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, so far as it concerns the Kings temporal power, the administering of the Communion in both kinds, and the Liturgy officiated in the English Tongue? Let them observe that *Panzani* the *Popes* Nuncio in *England* declared privately to his intimate friend, that the *Pope* would never admit any man to govern here as Bishop (meaning over the Catholics) that should favour the Oath of Allegiance. And the reason hereof is evident, because it is a thing contrary to the maxims of *Rome*. Moreover, in that little History of the said Nuncio there is a passage, which being well considered doth evince that the Courts of *England* and *Rome* are irreconcilable, unless *England* become intirely papal. That Author saith [*That this Realm is so perversly addicted to maintain its own resolute opinion of excluding the Popes authority, that this hath been the cause why the Catholics, who for the first twelve years conformed themselves unto the*
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Politic introduced into the Church of England, have since separated from it; and to testifie their uniting to the Pope, have refused to frequent the Protestants Churches, and have thereby framed one party in that State]

Let a fair accord in the general be supposed, yet the sole point of the *Popes* Supremacy shal dash the whole agreement. We know that Jesuitism is the predominant humour in the Papacy, and nothing can be done without their influence; and therefore we cannot be one with the Church of *Rome*, unless we be subject to the Court of *Rome*, and abandon all Protestantism.

Section XXXIV,

Whereupon all approaches and motions towards *Rome* are dangerous. For popish Agents will easily over-a&t the Reconcilers, & peradventure lead them whither they would not. If we walk on the brink, we may soon fall into the pit. Although it stands not with Christian Charity to disclaim agreement upon reasonable terms with any that are named Christians, yet it is not fit for a pu-

rer Church to incorporate with a Church defiled with such abominations. Besides, as to reason of State, Enmity with *Rome* hath been reputed the Stability of *England*; concerning which the Duke of *Rhoan* hath delivered this Maxime, [*That besides the Interest which the King of England hath common with all Princes, he hath yet one particular, which is, that he ought thoroughly to acquire the advancement of the Protestant Religion, even with as much Zeal as the King of Spain appears Protector of the Catholick.*] Indeed, that Scarlet-coloured Whore hath this bewitching ingredient in the cup of her Fornication, that she disposeth Subjects to security and blind obedience, and exalteth Princes unto absolute Dominion. But against this poison a sovereign Antidote is given by a judicious Writer, that this proves that subjects are more miserable, not that Princes are more absolute among *Papists*; forasmuch as where the *Pope* prevails, there is a co-domination and rivalry in rule, and this *Protestant* Princes are freed from:

from: and whereas Popery hath been ever infamous for excommunicating, murdering, deposing Princes, the *Protestant* Religion aims at nothing but that the Kings Prerogative and popular Liberty may be even balanced. If it be said, that this is true of *Protestantism*, but *Puritanism* leads to sedition, rebellion, Anarchy; let the world know, that *Puritanism* (which is no other than sound *Protestantism*) doth abhor these crimes, and defie the charge thereof. The people that were called *Puritans*, and now *Presbyterians*, have had no fellowship with *Politicians* and *Sectaries* in those pernicious ways: but their principle is for subjection to Princes, though they were Hereticks or Infidels; and if they differ herein from the *Prelatical Protestants*, it is only that they plead for liberty settled by known Laws and fundamental Constitutions.

Section XXXV.

From the reasons aforegoing we conclude, That *Protestantism* will best consist in the middle way, by reducing

Prelacy to the ancient synodical government or moderate Episcopacy. And this is a blessed work, worthy of a pacifick King, wth respect to his honor & service, whose title is *The Prince of Peace*. Herein his Majesty (with Gods help) may over-rule without difficulty or hazzard, He need not say of those that are averse (as *David* sometimes did of the sons of *Zerviah*) *That they are too hard for him*. Prelacy is not popular, but moderate Episcopacy is, and the more, because it is a healing expedient for our broken times. The Bishops depend intirely on the King, but he hath no dependance on them, no need of advantage from them. What if some interessed persons be discontented? The sober of the Nation (both Episcopal and Presbyterian) will have great contentment in the King's prudence and moderation. His Majesty is a Prince by Nature. He is our Native King, and the delight of the *English* Nation, and may govern as he please, without fear or hazard, by continuing to shew himself a common Father. For
there

there is none other upon whom the Interest of *England* can bottom it self, but our gracious dread Sovereign King *Charles*; whose House and Kingdom let the most High establish throughout all generations. He hath all hearts that are of sober principles earnestly waiting upon him, longing and panting after his moderation, and rejoycing in the begun expressions thereof; and of which the *Presbyterians* have had so great expectation, that they wished He were both King, Lords, and Commons, as to the settling of this grand Affair.

Section XXXVI.

The excessive dominion of the Hierarchy, with the rigorous imposition of humane Ceremonies, was accounted much of the malady of former times, which ended in those deadly Convulsions of Church and State. Do we here reproach our Mother the Church of *England*? In no wise.

This National Church consists of the Body of the Nation combined in the Unity of Faith, and substance of Divine

worship according to God's holy Word. But if the Church be taken in a more restrained sence for the Clergy or Ministry, yet so the Hierarchy is not the Church either formally or virtually. When as according to *Camdens* report, there are in *England* above nine thousand four hundred Ecclesiastical promotions, how comes all the Interest and virtue of such a numerous Clergy to be gathered up in six and twenty Bishops, with their respective Deans, and Chapters, and Archdeacons?

And can the self-same state and frame of Ecclesiasticks be now revived after so great and long continued alterations, by which the anti-prelatical party is exceedingly encreased and strengthened?

Machiavel, whose reason in things political may challenge regard, gives these two directions to a Prince to be alike observed for securing his hereditary Dominions: First, that he doth not transgress the institutions of his Ancestors: Secondly, That he serve the time according to new occasions; by which

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if a Prince be indued with ordinary diligence in action, he will preserve himself in his principality. His Majesty returns to the exercise of his Kingly power after a long interruption in Government, and great alteration in the State, Civil and Ecclesiastical. And he hath this happy advantage presenting it self to his hand, that he may give general satisfaction, by retaining the ancient Episcopal Government, with some necessary variation conformable to these times, in abating the excels of former things, and qualifying the same with some temperate ingredients. Certainly it concerns an hereditary Prince, as to maintain the ancient constitutions, so to redress ancient grievances, and to cure inveterate maladies. The party dissatisfied in former things, were not a company of precipitate Mutineers, but a Parliament of judicious and consciencious persons, and their adherents, who for the major part never intended to dissolve the Government, but have to their power endeavoured

voured and contrived the settling of these Nations on their ancient basis.

Section XXXVII.

Moreover, this dissatisfaction in the old frame of the Ecclesiastical Government is not a novelty of these times, as appears by those prudent considerations touching the better pacification and edification of the Church, presented to King *James* by that most learned Lord *Verulam*, sometimes Lord Chancellour of *England*, who was no *Presbyterian*, nor enemy to Episcopacy, in which are these passages.

There be two circumstances in the administration of Bishops, wherein I confess I could never be satisfied. The one, the sole Exercise of their Authority, the other, the Deputation of their Authority. For the first, the Bishop giveth orders alone, excommunicateth alone, judgeth alone. This seems to be a thing almost without example in Government, and therefore not unlikely to have crept in in the degenerate and corrupt

rupt times. We see the greatest Kings and Monarchs have their Councils. There is no Temporal Council in *England*, of the higher sort, where the Authority doth rest in one person. Again he saith, Bishops have their infirmities, and have no exception from that general malediction which is pronounced against all men living, *Va solt, &c.* Nay, we see the first warrant in spiritual causes is directed to a number, *Dic Ecclesia*, which is not so in temporal matters. Again, we see that the Bishop of *Rome* (*fas est & ab hoste doceri*, and no question in that Church the first Institutions are excellent) performeth all Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction as in Consistory; and whereof consisteth this Consistory, but of the Parish Priests of *Rome*, which term themselves Cardinals, à *Cardinibus Mundi*, because the Bishop thereof pretendeth to be universal over the whole world. Touching the second point, the deputation of their Authority, he saith, the Bishop exerciseth his Jurisdiction by his Chancellor and Commissary official
&c.

&c. We see in all Laws in the world, offices of confidence and skill cannot be put over, nor exercised by Deputy, except it be especially contained in the Original Grant, and then it becomes dutiful. There was never any Judge that made a Deputy. The Bishop is a Judge, and of an high nature: whence cometh it that he should depute, considering all trust and confidence is personal and inherent, and cannot, or ought not to be transposed? Surely in this again, *ab initio non fuit ita*: But it is probable that Bishops when they gave themselves too much to the glory of the world, and became Grandees in Kingdomes, and great Councillors to Princes, then did they deleague their proper Jurisdiction, as things of too inferiour a nature for their greatness; and then after the similitude of Kings and Count Palatines, they would have their Chancellours and Judges.

This and much more hath that great Scholar, Lawyer, and States-man observed in that excellent discourse.

Yea,

Yea, our late Sovereign in his discourse, touching the differences between himself and the two Houses, in point of Church-Government, declares in these words, that he is not against the managing of the Episcopal presidency in one man, by the joynt counsel and consent of many *Presbyters*, but that he had offered to restore it, as a fit means to avoid those errors, and corruptions, and partialities, which are incident to any one man; also to avoid Tyranny, which becomes no Christians, least of all Churchmen: besides, it will be a means to take away that odium and burden of affairs which may lye too heavy on one mans shoulders, as he thought it did formerly on the Bishops here.

Section XXXVIII.

By the desired reduction of *Prelacy*, to the coalition of *Episcopacy* and *Presbytery* in a due temperament, His Majesty will be so far from giving up, or weakening that power and influence, which in right and reason he ought to have
over

over Church and State, that he will thereby gain a surer and a larger interest. Bishops lessened in power, and encreased in number, and resident in the Churches, and duly dispensing the Word and Sacraments, are not like to alienate the King from Parliaments, nor Parliaments and people from the King, but will become more popular, and able to fix the hearts of the people to obedience and loyalty. And this popularity of Bishops and Presbyters, being alone, without potency, is no rational ground of distrust or jealousy to the King. For their influence upon others will not be from greatness of power and command, but from venerable esteem and reputation, and that stands upon their prudent, pious, and peaceable behaviour. Besides, his Majesty can easily keep them in such dependence on himself, as that he shall not hold this interest at their courtesie. Do any suggest the Presbyterians may grow upon him? Surely there are and will be enough to balance them, Certainly they have seen so little good
of

of changes, that a reasonable condition, with security, will be acceptable to them. Undoubtedly the union of both parties, by an equal accommodation, is the interest of Prince and people, the strength and stability of King and Kingdom. Let neither side lay hold on present mutable advantages to press them too far; but let all consider what will stand with lasting tranquillity. And above all, let his Majesties wisdom, who hath the high concernment of three Kingdoms for himself and his Heirs for ever, lay a good and solid foundation for the time to come.

Section XXXIX.

Finally, this accomodation is the interest of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer and Head of the Church, in as much as it takes in and secures thousands of godly able Orthodox Ministers, thousands and ten thousands of godly peaceable Christians, who otherwise might be rejected and oppressed. And it may well be acceptable to the whole Christian world,

world, because it bears conformity to the whole State of Christendom, to the foreign reformed Churches in *Presbytery*, to the rest of the Churches in *Episcopacy*, and to the ancient Church, next to the Primitive times, in the orderly conjunction of *Episcopacy* and *Presbytery*.

FINIS.

THE
Second Part
OF THE
Interest of England,
In the Matter of
Religion,
Unfolded in a
Deliberative Discourse,

PROVING,

*That it is not agreeable to sound Reason to
prefer the Contracted and Dividing In-
terest of one Party, before the general
Interest of Protestantism, and of the
whole Kingdom of England, in which
the Episcopal and Presbyterian Par-
ties may be happily United.*

Written by J. Corbet, Rector of Bramshott.

The second Impression Corrected and amended.

LONDON,

Printed for George Thomason, and are to be sold at the
Kese and Crows in St Pauls Church-yard, 1661.

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I Intreat the Reader to take notice, That in these Discourses I do not mention parties to maintain Division, but to procure Union; That necessity compels me to use those names of difference, which I heartily wish might be no more remembred: But whilst disagreeing Parties last, names of difference cannot cease, and to forbear their use is to little purpose. My business is to take things as I find them, and to state the Case between the Dissenters, and to shew how far they agree, and how little they differ, for this end, That Parties (both Name and Thing) might cease for ever.

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Moreover, as I use not the name of Presbyterian in the way of glorying, so I use not the name of Prelate or Prelatist in way of reproach, but meerly for distinction sake; and I have warrant for it from the friends of Prelacy, with whom it is not unusual to mention the name of Prelate in an honourable Sence.

The



The Second Part of the Interest of England in the Matter of Religion.

THe former Treatise of *the Interest of England in the Matter of Religion*, makes known the way of peace, in the reconciling of those two grand Parties, the *Episcopal* and *Presbyterian*, which, if made one, would take in, and carry along the strength of almost the whole Nation. The whole Structure thereof rests upon these Positions as its adequate Foundation.

That whilst the two forenamed Parties remain divided, both the Protestant Religion, and the Kingdom of England is divided against it self.

That the Presbyterians cannot be rooted out, nor their Interest swallowed up, whilst the State of England remaineth Protestant.

That their subversion, if it be possible to be accomplished, will be very pernicious to the Protestant Religion, and the Kingdom of England.

That the Coalition of both Parties into one may be effected by an equal accommodation, without repugnancy to their conscientious Principles on either side, in so much that nothing justifiable by Religion or sound Reason can put a bar to this desirable Union.

Now for as much as political matters are involved in difficulties and perplexities, by variety of complicated concernments, all which should be thorowly seen, and diligently examined and compared; and because the minds of men are commonly pre-ingatd

ged, or at least much byassed in these matters, and thereupon are not easily removed from their pre-conceived Opinions, I could not rest satisfied, as having done my part in this healing Work, unless besides a firm and clear proof of things in general, I endeavour a deeper impression, and more effectual perswasion, by searching on every side, by pressing up close to those closest concernments and most obstinate prejudices that oppose themselves, and by opening the passages, and making the way plain to this desired Pacification.

Section II.

It is a grave and weighty saying of the Duke of Rohan,——*Princes command the people; and Interest commands the Princes. The knowledge of this Interest is as much more raised above that of Princes Actions, as they themselves are above the People. A Prince may deceive himself, the Council may be corrupt, but the Interest alone never faileth: according as it is well or ill understood, it*

maketh States to live or dye.—According to this saying it is matter of life and death political to the Kingdom of *England*, as it doth well or ill understand its own Interest : In this deliberation two Interests exceeding great and precious, offer themselves unto us. They are distinct, yet not divided ; but they embrace each other, and they both apparently belong to us, and are undoubtedly to be owned by us. The one is Religious, the other Civil. The former is that of the Protestant Religion, and the latter is that of this Kingdom. Wherefore in this Inquiry ; the main and fundamental point of knowledge lies in discerning the true state of both. Now the true state of any Society lies in the Universality, or the whole Body, not in any contracting or sub-dividing part thereof : And the Interest lies in the conversation and advancement of the Universality.

Section III.

Hereupon this question ariseth,
which

which is the great Case and Question of the present times.

Whether we should assert the contracted and dividing Interest of one Party, before the general Interest of Protestantism, and of the whole Kingdom of England, in which the Episcopal and Presbyterian Parties may be happily United.

Be it here observed, That such is the joynt stock of both Parties in things of greatest moment, that by declining extreams on both hands, the Protestant Religion may be strengthened, with Unity in Doctrine, Worship and Discipline, among all its professors, and the Kingdom of *England*, by an inviolable Union between these comprehensive Parties may flourish in peace and plenty; for those discords that divide the members and distract the whole body, will cease; and those common concerns which tend to uphold and encrease the Universality, will be acknowledged and pursued.

Section

To turn aside from this common Interest of the whole body, to those inferiour partial ones, is to set up the trade of Monopolizers, which inevitably brings this mischief, that a few grow rich by impoverishing the Common-wealth, and this inconvenience also to them that follow the trade, that they grow rich upon the sudden, but are not secure, because many are oppressed, and more excluded from sharing in the benefit. In the present case, if the one Party be the only exalted Ones, and the other trodden under foot, the damage will redound to the Protestant cause, and to the Church and Kingdom of *England*. For whatsoever some men think, this Church and Kingdom is concerned in the one, as well as in the other Party. In the same case, though one side should rise suddenly to a great height, yet their Estate would be more secure and lasting, if they held the way open and secure to those of the other side, seeing
they

they are willing to close upon terms just and reasonable.

Section V.

Moreover, those Kingdoms, and Common-wealths, and Societies of all kinds, which are of the largest Foundation, are of the greatest potency. Now a comprehensive Interest, that takes in vast multitudes, is indeed a large Foundation, and a Society that builds upon it shall become great and mighty; but a contracted Interest, that draws all to a fewer number, is a narrow Foundation; and if it exclude many that should be taken in, it is too narrow for the Fabrick that should rest upon it. As a large house cannot be built upon a narrow foundation; so a great Kingdom, (such as is the Kingdom of *England*;) and an ample Society, (such as is that of the Protestant Religion,) cannot be built upon a narrow Interest.

Let it be considered, that the adverse Kingdom, to wit, the Papacy, is ample and powerfull: Should not the Protestant

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stant Religion, and the Church of *England* aim at enlargement, and lengthen their cords, to take within their line all those that are intirely affected to them : Then might they send forth much more numerous Forces of able Champions against the Armies of Antichrist : So should this National Church become *terrible as an Army with Banners.*

Section VI.

Besides those reasons for Unity, which concern all Kingdoms and Nations in the like case, there is one reason peculiar to this Kingdom, or rather to this Island of *Great Britain*, which is a little world apart. It is a notable saying, which hath been taken up, *That England is a mighty Animal, that cannot dye, except it destroy it self.* God hath so seated and placed this Island, that nothing but division within it self can hurt it. If envie and faction do not make us to forget our dear Country, and destroy our selves, the hope of Forreign Enemies will be forever

ever cut off. Wherefore it must needs be the wisdom of this State to smother all dividing Factions, and to abolish all partial Interests, that the common Interest of *England* may be alone exalted.

Section VII.

I am not ignorant that designs of Pacification between disagreeing Parties are liable to much suspicion, misconstruction, and hard censure; that the attempts of Reconcilers have commonly proved fruitless, and sometimes matter of disreputation to themselves: and no marvel that such cross effects should commonly follow such attempts; for sometimes they are made to reconcile light and darkness, the Temple of God and Idols. This was the way of a Great One, even a Prince in Learnings Empire, who would make an accord between the *Augustine* Confession and the Council of *Trent*; and also of a certain Romish Ecclesiastick, who would make the like accord between the said Council, and the Articles

cles of the Church of *England*, than which nothing could be more absurd and vain; for it could be nothing else but a violent wresting of those Decrees and Articles to a forced sence, against the propriety of language, and the scope of the whole matter, and the apparent judgement of both Parties; and so it could never heal the breach; For if both Parties were drawn to subscribe the same forms of Confession, but with meanings so far distant from each other, as are the Doctrines of the Protestant, and Roman Churches, they would not really advance one step the nearer to peace and concord.

Section VIII.

Such designs as these sometimes proceed from lukewarmness or indifferency in Religion, and an undervaluing of main Truths, together with a contempt of godly Zeal, as a thing superfluous and impertinent. And sometimes they proceed from vastness of minde, whereby some through too great a sence of their vast abilities, assume

sume to themselves a Dictatorship in Religion, to approve or condemn, admit or reject, according to their own estimation of things; which is a dangerous kind of ambition, and (as a learned man speaks) is to take up the Office of an Umpire between God and men. But many times such a design is set on foot with much craftiness, for the undoing of one of the Parties, as it hath been undertaken by some Romish Spirits, for the undermining of the Protestant Churches. A Divine of chief rank observes the arts and stratagems of some *Papish* Preachers, even of those Orders that have been held most implacable, whereby far otherwise than the accustomed manner, they extenuate the controversies, and acknowledge that too much rigor hath been used in some points, and in others too little sincerity: yea, some Jesuits went about making fair promises, yet in the mean time abating no point of the chief foundations of *Papal* Authority, which standing firm, they knew that the other

ther Concessions granted for a time might easily be drawn back, and the opposite rigors imposed on those that had been taken in the snare by a pretended yielding to some reformation. *Phillip Melancthon* (as the same Author observes) being a most Pious and Learned man, and zealous of the Churches peace, at first whilst he conceived that some Reformation might be hoped for from a General Council, was free and forward in some points of yielding to the Papists; but when he found that such a benefit was neither hopefull nor possible, he testified by his writings how far distant he was from the aim of the Conciliators.

Section IX.

But the Pacification here propounded is not by aggregating things inconsistent, nor by devising mongrel ways and opinions, made up out of both extremes, which can satisfy the consciences of neither Party; but by taking out of the way such extremes on both sides, as both may well spare and part with,

with, being such as are acknowledged no part of the Foundation, nor yet of divine Institution, but mutable according to times and occasions, and therefore cannot be of that importance as to break unity amongst brethren, that agree in the Doctrine of Faith, and the substance of Divine Worship. This desired Union is grounded upon the Apostles Commandement, and the pursuing thereof is no other then the urging of *St. Pauls* Doctrine throughout the whole fourteenth Chapter to the Romans, That none judge or despise another about things indifferent, or Ceremonious Observances, wherein as several men will abound in their own sence, so it is meet that every one be perswaded in his own minde concerning his particular practice, that nothing be done with a doubting conscience. His MAJESTIES Wisdom hath rightly comprehended this Matter in His Declaration touching *Ecclesiastical Affairs*, wherein He saith,
 ————— *We are the rather induced to take*
 L *this*

this upon Us (that is, to give some determination to the matters in difference) by finding upon a full Conference that We have had with the Learned men of severall perswasions, that the mischiefs under which both Church and State do at present suffer, do not result from any formed Doctrine or Conclusion which either Party maintains or avows, but from the passion, and appetite, and Interest of particular persons, which contract greater prejudice to each other by those affections, then would naturally arise from their Opinions.—— In old time there was a partition wall of legal Ceremonies and Ordinances raised up between Jews and Gentiles; but when the fullness of time was come, wherein God would make both Jews and Gentiles one in Christ, he was pleased to take down that partition wall which himself had reared up. In these latter times there hath been a partition wall of mans building, namely, controverted mutable Rites and forms of Religion, which have kept asunder Christians of the same

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same Nation, and of the same Reformed Protestant Profession: Both reason and charity pleads for the removing of these offences, that brethren may dwell together in Unity. And to transgress this rule of Charity, is not only to lay a yoke upon the necks of Christians, but also to lay snares for their Consciences.

Section X.

Nor will any defect in the State Ecclesiastical insue upon the removal of these matters in controversie: for the points of Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline acknowledged by both Parties, are a sufficient and ample Foundation for the edification and peace of the Church to rest upon; for which we cannot have a fuller Testimony than what is given by His MAJESTY in His aforesaid Declaration,——*We must for the Honour of all those of either Persw-sion, with whom we have conferred, Declare, That the Professions and desires of all for the advancement of Piety and*

*true Godliness are the same, their Pro-
 fessions of Zeal for the Peace of the
 Church the same, of affection and duty to
 Us the same; they all approve Episcopa-
 cy; they all approve a set Form of Li-
 turgy; and they all disapprove and dis-
 like the sin of Sacrilege, & the alienation
 of the revenue of the Church. And if up-
 on these excellent Foundations, in submis-
 sion to which there is such an Harmony of
 Affections, any Superstructure should be
 raised to the shaking of these Foundations,
 and to the contracting and lessening of the
 blessed gift of Charity, which is a vital
 part of Christian Religion, We shall
 think Our Self very unfortunate, and
 even suspect that We are defective in
 that administration of Government with
 which God hath entrusted Vs:—These
 His Majesties Words I receive with
 much veneration; for they are a Di-
 vine Sentence in the Mouth of the
 King, and they fathom the depth of
 this grand business.*

*It is therefore manifest, as from Rea-
 son, so from His Majesties Testimony,
 that*

that those unhappy discords do not result from any formed Doctrine or Conclusion, that either toucheth or borders upon the Foundation; and that excellent Foundations are contained in those points, in submission to which there is found such an Harmony of Affections; and consequently, that the laying aside of all the points in controversy, would not cause any defect in the State Ecclesiastical. What then is the root of these mischiefs of Division? Is it the perpetual hatred between the seed of the Woman, and the seed of the Serpent? or is it an uncharitable and froward spirit of opposition, by reason of irritated animosity, and deep suspicion or jealousy? or is it some temporary carnal Design?

It is first inquired, *Whether the root hereof be the perpetual hatred between the seed of the Woman, and the seed of the Serpent?*

Section XI.

Nothing is more certain from Scripture and experience, then that a form of the true Religion may be with a kind of Zeal embraced, and the power thereof hated and impugned by the same persons. The Scribes and Pharisees were zealous & exact in the outward forms of the law of *Moses*, yet their hatred of the power of that Religion appeared by their obstinate rejecting and persecuting of Christ, and those that believed on him. Many do imbrace a form of the Christian Verity in the general Doctrins, and in some plausible yet superficial practice: Nevertheless they cannot abide the genuine and spiritual explication and close application of the same Verity, leading to the life and power thereof. Now if this were the true state of the difference, that those of the one perswasion only did urge the necessity of the New Birth, and of a holy and circumspect walking in all Christians, and to that end seek the advance-

vancement of such a Ministry as (with blessed *Paul*) travels in birth, till Christ be formed in the Hearers, and such as is quick and powerful, entring to the dividing of the soul and spirit, and discovers the secret rottenness, and destroys the self-confidence of the deceitful heart, and drives the soul out of self to draw it to Christ; such a Ministry as is assiduous and instant in the dispensation of the word by instruction, reproof and comfort, and in all other parts of the Pastoral duty, that as much as in it lies, it may present every man perfect in Christ: And if those of the other perswasion account the urging of these things severe foolishness peevishness, pride, hypocrisie, affected singularity, and suppose the way to heaven common and easie, and accordingly seek the advancement of such a Ministry that is more smooth and plausible then searching and faithful, more slick and cold in the publick dispensation of the Word, and in private admonition, indulging the peo-

ples corruptions, and generally temporizing with their carnal spirit; I say, if the case were so between them, I could proceed no further; for in such a case to propose ways of Accommodation, were to make proposals of Peace to Parties divided by an everlasting enmity: but God forbid that the state of the difference should be so deplorable. We trust that neither the one nor the other have so learned Christ as to exalt a form of Godliness, and deny the power thereof: And that it is not or ought not to be so, and that it is on all hands disavowed with detestation, we take it for a principle or ground-work whereon to bottom our whole design. The King Declares, *That the Professions and desires of all those of either persuasion, with whom he hath conferred, are the same for the advancement of Piety and true Godliness.* Let the joynt pursuance of these professions and desires set both Parties agreed, especially since His Majesty hath thus Declared in these gracious words, — *Our purpose and resolu-*

tion is, and shall be, to promote the power of Godliness, to encourage the exercises of Religion both publick and private, and to take care that the Lords Day may be applyed to holy Exercises without unnecessary divertisements; and that insufficient, negligent, and scandalous Ministers may not be promoted in the Church.——

Is an uncharitable and froward spirit of opposition, by reason of irritated animosity, and deep suspition and jealousy, the root of these discords?

Section XII.

We fear indeed that too much tartness, if not bitterness of spirit, keeps the Breach open. Differences of long continuance and settled prejudices do choak the exercise of Charity. And the truth is, formerly the current of occasions ran along to aggravate these differences, and to exasperate these passions.

sions: Let us now at length take hold of the right means to stop this current of contention. Remove the occasions, lay aside controverted matters, whereof there will be no miss in the Church of God: Let forms of Worship and Government be so cut out, that they may not pinch and gall the consciences of either Party, as it may be done by men of sober and charitable judgments without any impeachment of such order and decency, as agrees with the simplicity and spiritual Glory of Gospel Administrations; so after a while the froward humor that worketh on both sides, would spend and lose it self: Yea, I am perswaded that some spirits now exulcerated through these distempers, would not prove incurable or implacable. After a little experience of such proper healing remedies, both sides will finde themselves brethren that had mistaken one another, and forsaken their common Interest.

Section XIII.

Most serious thoughts of heart have often led me to contemplate and lament the peculiar calamity of the Church of God in these Dominions, that from time to time it hath been afflicted with the most unhappy kind of controversies: for they come not neer the Foundation, nevertheless they are very pernicious and destructive. They consist not so much in speculation as practice, and particularly their immediate influence is upon the Churches interest, and inevitably makes a breach in Church-Unity. For Ecclesiastical Offices, and Church Priviledges, and Communion of Worship both in former and latter times, have been inclosed with such Forins and Rites and other needless rigors, that the way thereunto was kept shut against many that had received with the heart that Common Faith which was once given to the Saints. Hence proceeded despising and judging one another, and deep censures,

censures, alienations and separations,
 which will undo any Society of what-
 soever Profession. The Papists not-
 withstanding their great boast of Uni-
 ty, are much more divided within
 themselves than any Protestants from
 each other; for the rent goes thorow
 the main Foundation of their Faith.
 With them the Head Corner-stone, or
 rather the adequate Foundation, is
 their Churches infallibility; but where
 to place this pretended infallibility, they
 can by no means agree: for upon the
 matter one half of them place it in the
 Pope, and the other in a general
 Council. If you ask, *How then doth*
that vast Building hang together? How
doth that Babylonish Kingdom stand?
 Surely they have the skill to make that
 great point of difference a matter of
 speculation more then of practice, and
 they holdfast two main practical things
 which do hold both in one; namely,
 the *Hierarchy*, under the Headship of
 the Pope of *Rome*, and the Commu-
 nion of the *Mass*. They are all one
 both

both in Worship and Church-Communion, and also in the whole body of Ecclesiasticks, compacted by several joynts and ligaments under one Papal Head. Thus the children of this world are wise in their generation; and let the children of Light borrow this point of Wisdom from them, which is to take care that our different opinions do not brangle our Church-Communion and Ecclesiastical Polity. And in as much as Protestants have not that Popish way of quick dispatch for all controversies, which is to acquiesce in the Churches infallibility; but according to their Principles, they must seek their Warrant from Scripture, by the help of the Churches directive, and their own discrete Judgment; the only way for them to hold themselves in the bond of Peace, is to avoid all imposition of things unnecessary, in which it is exceeding difficult, or morally impossible for all sound Protestants to be of the same persuasion.

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Section XIV.

Let us here take notice of another singular point of Wisdom, followed by the Church of *Rome* in the Council of *Trent*, which was to shun, as a rock, the determining of such Doctrines as were controverted among the Catholics; and according to this settled Rule the debates of that Council were governed. Oft times indeed there arose hot contests among the Divines about Scholastical niceties, the several Orders of Friars being therein passionately addicted to their several opinions; but the Prelates, who alone had the decisive Voice, would always bring things to a temper; and the Decrees were so framed, that the Opinions of neither Party were condemned. Let the Church of Christ mingle this Wisdom of the Serpent with his Dove-like Innocency, to wit, not to urge with severity things disputed amongst sound and sober Protestants. But it hath seemed good to some Protestants
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to walk by a contrary rule, to heighten differences between themselves, and those whom they called Puritanes, and to judge them irreconcilable, and to lessen differences between themselves and the Romanists, in order to a Pacification. We hope that this errour is or may be perceived by those that have been enchanted into it. I am informed by a Writer of our Ecclesiastical History, who is of the Episcopal perswasion, That an Episcopal Doctor of great note, and now a Bishop, did within these few years use his utmost endeavours to gain upon the *Sorbonists* in *Paris*, and thereupon that he complied with them as far as he could do in Christian prudence, and with a safe conscience. Now the *Sorbonists* are the most moderate Papists, and the said Doctor is known to be far enough from the least smatch of Puritanism; yet not any Accommodation could be heard of between them, but rather the contrary, even in the point of the *Apocrypha*.

Seeing

Seeing these things are so, one might wonder that any learned men, zealous of the Protestant Religion, should remain averse from the true way of Unity among disagreeing Protestants, when the pacification between Protestants and Papists is become desperate. One would conclude that Wise and Learned men could not be so overseen, if there were not a deeper mystery in this business.

Whereupon I pass to a further Inquiry, *Whether the fomenting of these discords do not proceed from a carnal design?* And I shal argue even upon the case of a worldly Interest? *Whether the way of severe Imposing, or of moderate Condescending, be the more advisable?*

Section XV.

If the settlement of the Churches Peace, by giving needful satisfaction and security to the *Presbyterians*, and the enlargement of the Churches Interests, by taking in the multitudes of that denomination, be neglected in this discerning age; we must needs believe that the root of this dissention goes deeper then passions, prejudices and mis-apprehensions, and that some carnal and partial Interest is that root of bitterness that bears this gall and wormwood.

Papists themselves have noted, that the Court of *Rome* had rather abandon the hopes of regaining three Kingdoms to their pretended Catholick Church, then declare it lawful for the English Papists to take the Oath of Allegiance. When the Council of *Trent* was held, & most of the Princes that sent Embassadors to the Council were instant that some regard might be had of the Protestants, and their recovery endeavour-

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ed by moderation and reformation ; the Pope knowing that their return upon such terms could never be hoped for, without the diminution of the Revenue and Authority of his Court, judged it most necessary for the Interest of his pretended Apostolique See, to make the division strong and the Parties irreconcilable , that those Countries and People which continued in obedience to him might be kept intirely Popish.

When men contend for the immutability of mutable Orders, and stily oppose the due regulation of things exorbitant and excessive, and resolve to give no ground for the gaining of dissenting brethren, it is not the love of Christ, but perverse self-love, and the love of the world that constrains them. Such interested persons are never good Counsellors for the publick weal.

Section XVI.

Now in as much as some particular carnal Interest is justly suspected in the
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impetuous and obstinate pursuance of the things in controversy, we are willing here to make it a question of Interest, and upon that account to make an address to the reason even of those that are carried forth with greatest vehemence in favour of the Episcopal, and in opposition to the *Presbyterian* Party. All enterprises that have their beginning in judgment and not in passion, are directed to a certain end set up as a mark, and that end is not a business at rovers, but some particular steady issue of things certainly or probably apprehended and expected: Wherefore let wise men consider the mark whereat they level, and to what issue and state of things their actions tend. Here is a numerous party, not of the dreggs and refuse of the Nation, but of the judicious and serious part thereof: What will they do with them? and how will they order the matter concerning them? Would they destroy them? I solemnly profess that I abhor to think so by the generallity

of the Episcopal perswasion : I would disdain to mention such an unreasonable impiety, were it not to shew the inconsiderate and absurd proceedings of an unalterable opposition, as that it cannot drive to any formed end and issue. That *Protestants* should destroy *Protestants* for dissenting in the point of Ceremonies, and sole jurisdiction of Bishops, is so dreadful a violation of Charity and common honesty, that it is a most uncharitable and dishonest thing to suppose it of them. What then? would they bear them down, or keep them under hard Conditions? Shall all persons that cannot yield exact obedience to Ecclesiastical injunctions concerning all the parts of the Liturgy, and Ceremonies, be suspended and deprived as formerly? Shall Ministers of this Judgment be cast and kept out of Ecclesiastical preferment and employment? Shall all private conferences of godly peaceable Christians, for mutual edification, be held unlawful Conventicles? It hath
 been

been thought by wise men to be against the Rules of Government, to hold under a rigid yoke a free people of such a number and quality, and intermingled in all estates and ranks, and intimately conjoynd with all parts of the body *P*olitique, that it is almost impossible to exclude their Interest from a considerable share in publique actions. Besides, is it for the service of Christ, and the encrease of his Kingdom the Church, that so many able Divines should be debarred the use of their Lords Talents, that so many laborious Ministers should sit still in silence; that when Christ teacheth us to pray that the Lord would thrust forth Labourers into his Harvest, those Labourers should be thrust out of his harvest? Surely this would make a cry in the ears of the Lord of the Harvest. Let me add this, 'Tis a hard matter to silence them that will preach virtually in pious Conferences, whose occasional and Table Discourses will be a kind of Sermon.

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Let me offer a third way, Will they afford them liberty of Conscience, and yet stave them off, as a divided Party, to stand alone in their Principles and Interest? Verily I cannot think it is in their heart so to do. What then remains but to prepare the way, and to make the path straight for a solid and perfect closure, by laying aside those unnecessary occasions of stumbling.

Section XVII.

If the neglect of brotherly Pacification hold on, and the *Hierarchy* resolve upon their own advancement to the highest pitch, one may well conclude, That they make a full reckoning to wear out the Presbyterians, and to swallow up their Interest, conceiving they are able to effect it by degrees; and that greater changes then these have been wrought without much ado. And we confess indeed, that a great change in Religion was made by Qu. *ELIZABETH* without much dispute or difficulty: The alteration

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was not sudden but gradual. *Camden* writes, That in the entrance of the Queens Reign, for a whole moneth and more, the Roman Religion stood as it did at the death of Queen *MARY*. On the 27. of *December* the Epistles and Gospels, the Lords Prayer, Creed and Ten Commandements, together with the Letany, were read in the English Tongue: On the 22. of *March* the intire use of the Sacrament in both kinds was restored by Parliament. On the 24. of *June* the Sacrifice of the *Mass* was abolished, and the whole Liturgy restored into English. In *July* the Oath of Supremacy was given to the Bishops: And in *August* Images were taken out of the Churches and broken or burnt. Why may not the *Hierarchical* Interest swallow up the *Presbyterian*, as easily as *Protestantism* prevailed over *Popery*? Surely I take these several cases to be very different. And first, because Queen *ELIZABETH* had this fundameutal maxime as agreeable to her Conscience and

the Interest of Her State, to banish
 hence the exercise of the Roman Re-
 ligion. But our Gracious King in His
 Christian Prudence and Compassion
 seeks the uniting of His Protestant
 Subjects, and the healing of their
 breaches, by His Wise and Gracious
 condescensions already Declared. Be-
 sides, in the beginning of the Queens
 Raighn the inferiour Clergy of this
 Kingdom universally appeared to be
 but lukewarm Papists, and many of
 them might be supposed to be Prote-
 stants in hearts, and the most of them
 very unlearned, and indifferent men in
 Religion. And a great part of the
Hierarchy were not more zealous than
 the rest: For when at that time the
 Ecclesiastical Promotions in *England*
 were numbered above nine thousand
 four hundred in all, there were not
 more then fourscore Rectors of Chur-
 ches, fifty Prebendaries, fifteen Heads
 of Colledges, twelve Arch-Deacons,
 twelve Deans, six Abbots and Abbes-
 ses, and fourteen Bishops that refused
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the Oath of Supremacy. Also the English Service was so prepared, that it might be no abomination to the Papists, no positive thing therein occurring repugnant to their Doctrine; for which cause they frequented the same for the first ten years; and the Pope did not in many years send forth his thunder & lightning against the Queen. And Popery being in substance a Religion contrary to what was publickly professed, had no advantage for encrease by publick Preaching, or Books publickly allowed, All these accidents did help forward to an absolute settlement of the Protestant Religion. But we may find the state of things far otherwise in point of disposition or inclination toward the Dominion of absolute Prelacy, and the rigorous imposition of Ceremonies, and the extirpation of the dissenting Party: For there are now in *England* thousands of Ministers dissatisfied in the *Hierarchy* and *Ceremonies*, who are all competently, and many of them eminently learn-

learned. They are not generally of light spirits, but steddly and well resolved, and tenderly affected touching their spiritual liberties. The way which in scorn is called Puritanism, is not another Religion in substance than Protestantism, but the very same, or one branch thereof distinguished from the other by an accidental difference. Protestant and Puritane Doctrine and Worship, all men may know to be the same for substance; and Puritanism will grow up with Protestantism, notwithstanding all opposition, as I have manifested in the former discourse.

Commonly those people who try all Doctrines by Scripture, and are swayed more by its Authority than by the Ordinances and Customs of men, do much hesitate and stagger concerning the sole Jurisdiction of Bishops, the pomp of the *Hierarchy*, and sacred mystical Ceremonies of Humane Institution. And therefore let the Episcopal Party never look to be rid of these difficulties, till they remove the matters
in

in Question, whereat a knowing people are always ready to stumble.

Neither in these times are the Presbyterians so hateful a generation as some would have them; they are odious to none but those to whom they were ever odious, or else to such Ignorants as follow the Cry, and speak evil of they know not what. They have had no considerable loss of their number by revolt; and whatever comes to pass, they think never the worse of their main Cause, which I have expressed in the Character given of them: And if some or many of them have a liberty in their own judgements touching conformity, yet that conformity will not strengthen the designs of those Prelatists that are most rigid in such impositions, and seek to tread down the Presbyterians. It was a notable question which a Carthaginian Senator put to *Hanibal's* Agents, after the great overthrow given to the *Romans* at *Canna*. When they had magnified *Hanibal's* great Atchievements, *Hanno* asked them

them, *Whether any of the Romans had come to demand Peace; and whether any Town of the Latines, or any of their Colonies had yet rebelled against the Romans?* The Agents denying the one and the other, *Hanno* replied, *Then is the War as intire yet as at the first.* I apply this, to shew how easily men mistake the progress of their own affairs, and think themselves to be ready for a triumph, when indeed they have gotten little, and the state of the controversie is still as intire and firm as ever.

Hitherto I have asserted *the Interest of the Universality in opposition to the advancement of a partial Interest.* I have endeavoured to make it manifest, *That the several Parties by a mutual yielding and waving their partial Interests may be united to promote the Interest of the Universality:* for I have laid these ground-works, to wit; *That the breach is not kept open by any formed Doctrine or Conclusion of either Party, nor (as I trust) by the spirit of everlasting*

sting enmity; but either by a humour of opposition, that may be qualified and subdued; or by some carnal design, which may and must be denied when its error and danger is discovered.

In the remainder of this Discourse I am to shew, That the Presbyterians are fit and worthy to be imbodyed with the whole number of the good people of England; in the next place to persuade the Union by several Arguments; and then to remove certain impediments, and to argue from the particular concernments of the King, of the Nobility and Gentry, and of the Episcopal Clergy; and lastly, to offer some few essays concerning the paths of Peace.

Section XVIII.

Saint Paul was sometimes constrained by the weakness of some and the malice of others, to boast on his own behalf, and to Apologize again and again

again for speaking as a fool: I trust therefore that wise men will bear with that unto which the like necessity compels me, on the behalf of the people that are now denominated *Presbyterian*. In estimating the numbers of this persuasion, it is not the right way to go by the Poll throughout all sorts promiscuously; but to take a survey of the intelligent and active sort of the people, and in that sort to compare their number with others. Howbeit in any way of reckoning suppose them the lesser, yet they may be found a balancing number. But I am willing to pass from number to weight. They that will not acknowledge them to be sincere, cannot deny them to be serious persons; they that will not acknowledge them to be sober in their judgements, cannot deny them to be sober in their conversations. But we know they are both serious, and sincere, and sober, as well in Religion as in Morality: and a few sober people are more valuable, both for Religious and Civil concerns, than

than a multitude of dissolute or vain and empty persons. One serious rational man will carry more in fit opportunities, than all the vapourers in the neighbourhood. Those that are ill affected to the Presbyterians commonly despise them as an unlearned dull sort of men knowing nothing. Truly we will not herein boast beyond our line, nor magnifie those of our own persuasion, in derogation to any others; but we think that this disparagement is cast upon them because they are commonly no vapourers. Surely they have amongst them both Divines and Gentlemen, who do not use to turn their backs upon gainsayers, but have been and will be ready to render a reason of their judgment and practice to any that shall demand it of them. Nevertheless, we do not envy the learning of any Episcopal Divines, but gladly acknowledge it, and desire to partake in the benefit of it, and wish that whatsoever gift is received by any, may be more and more servicable to the Church

Church of God. Neither are they an ignoble object for; it hath not at all appeared that they have degenerated from the English Virtue and Valour. They have for common tranquillity and safety closed with the first opportunity for a general accord, and so have knowingly made way for the reviving of the other Party, supposing that the former enmity would cease. And they had reason to hope, that amidst the joy of the Nation, they should not be left in sadness. The present interruption and check given to this expected reconciliation, we attribute to the hurry of mens minds upon this great and unexpected change, by which it happeneth that they scarce know where they are, and hardly contain themselves within due bounds. But we trust that these passions will be over, and the spirits of all will settle in a calm and good temper. Hitherto the contradictions may pass for the effects of passion, not of inveterate malice; wherefore, *dum res est integra*, let second

cond thoughts be milder. A quick passage of Count *olivares* touching the right way of Accommodation, may be pertinent to this business. Our late Sovereign, when Prince of *Wales*, being in the Spanish Court in pursuance of the marriage with the *Infanta* of *Spain*, and the Negotiation being clogged with many interruptions, discontents and jealousies, and all being like to fall asunder, *Olivares* whether in humour or earnest propounded these three ways; The first, *That Prince Charles should become a Catholique*; The second, *That the Infanta should be delivered unto him upon the former security without further Condition*; The third was, *To bind him as fast as they could, and not to trust him with any thing*. Of these three ways, he said, the two former were good; but the last was a bad one. In like manner might a discerning Prelatist resolve, that there be three ways of bringing these disputes to an issue; The first, *That the Presbyterians should voluntarily become Episcopal, and thorowly*

conformable; The second, *That the way of brotherly accord should be held open and secure to them by an equal Accommodation*; The third, *That they be trusted in nothing, but bound up fast by the hardest Condition that can be imposed*. Of these three ways let him conclude with respect to his own interest, that the two former are good, but the last very bad.

Section XIX.

Much partiality and prejudice hath gotten the sway in those men that speak and act, as if there were cause to fear none, to curb none, to provide remedies against none but Presbyterians: Was *England* acquainted with no troubles, or infested with no intestine broyls before this kind of men arose? Are these the proper enemies of *England*? Let them know, that the true intestine Enemies of any State are those within it, that depend upon Foreign Interests, and on whom Foreign States have influence.

A great States-man makes it one fundamental maxime of Queen *ELIZABETH* to banish hence the exercise of the Roman Religion, because it was the onely means to break all the plots of the Spaniards, who under this pretext did here toment Rebellion. Upon the same ground the Law banisheth Popish Priests, that Forreign influences might not distemper this Kingdom: But the Presbyterians can have no temptation to tamper with Forreign Combinations; for their Interest is precisely and perfectly Protestant, and for their unreconcilableness to the Church of *Rome*, their greatest adversaries will bear them witness: And when ever this Land shall have need of help against its chiefest Enemies, they will be found so true to the Interest of *England*, as none more, and consequently must and will be interested in its defence. Wherefore let *England* have regard to those that must be her fast friends, not only for good will, but also for perpetual necessity.

Section XX.

Moreover, a wise State is busie in finding out, but not in making Enemies. Who can produce one solid reason, that renders this Party Enemies to the Government, or the Person Governing? They are lovers of Monarchy, and of the Royal Family. From neither of these have they any cause of distrust or dissatisfaction: They have nothing to hold in derogation to His Majesties Authority, safety, or benefit; and His Majesty hath nothing to hold that stands in opposition to their security. There have been indeed unhappy differences; but whence proceeding? Not from any thing intrinsecal to His Majesties Government or to their condition; but from things very remote from the Interest of Sovereignty. The Kings Affairs do allow Him to extend Favour and Clemency to them, as to any other of His Subjects; and His Condescension towards

wards them will work as happy effects to His satisfaction.

Section XXI.

Some men resolving in all things to detract from the Presbyterians, have said, That they promoted the Kings Return, not out of good will to His Majesty, or a love of Order and Unity; but out of fear of being destroyed by the Phanaticks. Upon the occasion of this surmise, and the evil design thereof, I am willing to debate this Question.

Whether the Presbyterians closure with the King in all avowed subjection and service be sincere and solid, that His Majesty may safely confide in them?

The pretended reason of their insincerity seems to me to add much to their reputation in that behalf: For if the Phanaticks would destroy them, it is manifest that they are none of them. Phanaticks would not destroy themselves willingly. The several various Sects will wrangle with each other in

verbal contests ; but they never knowingly plotted or banded against each other upon the account of their different Opinions, but did all unite in one common Principle of pretended liberty of Conscience, and in one common cause of Universal Toleration. Be it also granted, that self-preservation engaged the Presbyterians by any means to obviate and overturn the designs of the Sectaries, it shews that the Sectarian Interest and theirs are Inconsistent, as also that they are not unreconcilable to the Episcopal part of Protestants ; and that they had pacifick inclinations, willing to put a period to these contentions. Let men surmise the worst they can of their intentions in declaring for the King ; yet in as much as they had a choice before them, to turn this way or that way, it is evident they would betake themselves to that way that had the lesser evil and the fairer shew of good. And could any think that they would knowingly make a choice of that which should destroy their just liberty :

berty: wherefore were it no more than
 this, it might gain them some regard,
 for that they hoped for some good in
 this way, when they could hope for
 none at all from the wilde ways and
 fancies of Phanaticks: But the truth is,
 they turned not to a lesser evil, but to a
 thing in it self desirable; for it was a
 clear case to men of sound minds and
 sober Principles, that there was no way
 to lead us out of that wilderness where-
 in we wandred, but the uniting of all
 sound and sober Protestants in things
 wherein all agree, and a mutual for-
 bearance in things not necessary to
 peace and edification. The Presbyte-
 rians knew their single Interest would
 not settle the Nation: And the Episco-
 palians may know as well that their
 single Interest will prove deficient. In
 such a case, what well-minded persons
 affecting the peace of the Church and
 Kingdom would not promote the re-
 stitution of the Royal Family, that the
 King, in whom alone the whole Nati-
 on can settle, may pare off the super-

fluities of particular partial Interests, and make a Union in the general Interest of the Protestant Religion, and of Great Britain? This was the scope of the Presbyterian design in that particular: And as touching their cordial affection to His Majesties Person and Government, we have their own more affectionate and solemn professions for it, which are graciously owned by His Majesty. And if any persist to gainsay those expressions, seeing they are not searchers of hearts, it lies upon them to prove this pretended disaffection by something discernable in the outward behaviour. But suppose that a peoples Conscience and good inclination and disposition be called into question, yet this is a maxime unquestionable, *That the main ground of sure and constant benevolence between Prince and People, is a firm perswasion, that they are the mutual Interest of each other.* His Majesties Royal Person and His Princely Virtues are amiable to us; He is a Crown of Glory to the English Nation:

Nation : But that which got the mastery over all difficulties, in restoring Him to His Dominions, was an undoubted knowledge that the Nations Interest was bound up in Him our indubitable Sovereign Lord. There is a necessity of meer compulsion that drives the unwilling, and there is a necessity of Interest that draws a willing people : When this latter necessity doth bring a Prince and People together, ingenuous minds will turn this necessity into a virtue ; and so the joyning of Interests draws after it the joyning of hearts. The *Presbyterians* enjoying the same protection and benefit which other sober *Protestants* and Loyal Subjects, will see no other probable nor possible way of repose and safety, but under His Majesties happy Government. It is not therefore a necessity of present force, but of constant Interest, which is here commended, as so great a bond of loyalty, and which Princes use to take for their best security. The wisest way is, not to reject and slight a party that are brought

brought to hand, and made for a Prince's Interest, upon a suspicion that they may prove inconstant; but to use the known means of preventing such inconstancy as is pretended, and to manifest that regard to their encouragement and satisfaction, as that they may rest assured, that their own and the publick peace do run in the same channel.

From the Reasons foregoing I conclude, *That the Presbyterians are fit and worthy to be imbodyed with the whole number of the good People of England.* I proceed to perswade this Union by several Arguments.

Section XXII.

England hath indured conflicts of almost twenty years by Wars, Divisions, Commotions, and manifold changes;

ges; it was abased, enfeebled, and brought very low; all which do shew that some great distemper had taken hold of this Body Politick, before these things could break forth: There is at length by the late Revolution a providential offer of rest and peace. After those sad conflicts, and this happy offer of Providence, shall the seeds of discord lodge perpetually in this Land? I fear passions of bitterness are too ready to stir and provoke. Take away this fuel of strife, the urging of things to uphold distinctions of Parties. Whilest things are at such a pass, animosities will arise upon every occasion; discontents and quarrels will be ready to break forth in every Town and Parish, and almost in all mixed companies and occasional Meetings. But let the propounded Accommodation be accepted and established, and the former mutual injuries will pass into forgetfulness; and persons formerly engaged against each other, will be able to look one another in the face without

without provocation and new quarrels. Where is our Charity and regard to publick tranquillity, if we reject the sure and only means of Concord ?

Section XXIII:

Uniformity in Religion is beautiful and amiable; but we ought to consider not only what is desirable, but what is attainable. There have been, are, and always will be such points as the Apostle terms *doubtful disputations*. When the severity of Laws and Canons inforce external Uniformity in things of this nature, it exerciseth a tyranny over mens judgments, and holds them in a servile condition, that they are not free, but captivated to the Authority of men, or suppressed from making a due search into matters of Religion; yea, this thralldom will inevitably reach to things of an higher nature, even the vital parts of Christianity. That servile Principle which hath the heart of Popery in it, must be introduced, to wit, that the Laity should

should not search the Scriptures, nor try the Doctrines delivered, but acquiesce in what their Teachers say, without the Exercise of their own reason, or judgment of discretion. Hereupon will follow gross ignorance and supine carelessness in the things of God, and in those that any whit mind Religion (which is the best of the matter) a blind devotion: And a people rude and servile in Religion will be rude and dissolute in Conversation, as we see in Popish Countries, and in all places where spiritual tyranny prevaieth. This is so great an evil that it cannot be countervailed by all the imaginable benefit of Uniformity: And the truth is, all profitable Uniformity is mingled with sobriety, and stands not in an indivisible point, but admits a latitude, and by a little variety in matters of lesser moment, becomes more graceful, because it is more unstrained and unaffected.

Section

Section XXIV.

It is a chief point of knowledge in those whose work it is to mould and manage a Nation according to any order of things, to understand what is the temper of the people, what Principles possess and govern them, or considerable Parties of them, and to what pass things are already brought among them.

Those who duly observe and regard the disposition and present State of *England*, and the principles and affections of the several considerable Parties, will be able to give the best advice for a happy settlement: For such a course as is wisely and successfully taken in one Nation, may in the like business prove unfortunate in another Nation, or in the same at another time. A State may probably root out such opinions as it conceives to be heterodox and inconvenient, by using great severity in the beginning, when the opinions are but newly sowed in mens minds, and the
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the people are of such a nature, as to abhor dangers, and aim to live securely, and when the Nation in general is devoted to the ancient customs of their fore-fathers. But the same course may not be taken when the opinions have been deeply rooted and far spread, by long continuance, in a Nation of a free spirit, and zealous; and the generality of those that in a Law sence are called *Cives*, do not detest them. At this day *England* affords a multitude of Episcopal Zealots, and a multitude of Presbyterian Zealots, balancing the former; and between these two there lye a more indifferent sort of people, whereof a great number care for none of these things; but others are more intelligent and considerate; and these seem to approve some things, and again to disapprove some things on either side: As far as I have observed, the indifferent sort of men do accord with the Episcopal way in affecting the Common-Prayer-Book; and those among them, that are of any reckoning for worth

worth or honesty, do also according to the *Presbyterian* way, affect the constant preaching of the Word, and the residency of Ministers in their Parochial Charges, and disaffect plurality of Benefices. Knowledge hath so increased that the people in general will more observe their Teachers Doctrine and conversation; and the impertinencies of the one, and the irregularities of the other shall not pass without noting. The insufficient, idle, and scandalous will fall into contempt, and be slighted by the common people. The profanation of the Lords Day by open sports and pastimes is by the Civil part of the Nation accounted scandalous. Furthermore, the present Age being more discerning, all sorts affect a greater liberty of Judgment and Discourse then hath been used in former times. Whereupon the State of this Kingdom requires a temper or *medium* between two extremes, to wit *medium abnegationis*, in those unnecessary things where-
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in no accord can be expected between the Parties, by abolishing, or not injoyning them, and *medium participationis*, in things necessary to Order and Government, wherein the moderate of both Parties do easily comply with each other. When the State like a prudent Mother, not led by the passions of her angry Children, shall not engage in their quarrels on this or that side; but settle such a temperament for their common good; love and peace may ensue between the Parties, though difference of judgment still remains. When the Nation shall not espouse to it self the Interest of a party, but intirely reserve it self for the good of the Universality; those hot disputes and contests will of themselves fall to the ground; and men of different judgments will be less fond of their own opinions, when they observe that the State doth not judge its happiness to rest upon any of them, and that the welfare of the Church and Kingdom consists without them.

Section XXV.

This Kingdom after the removing of foundations, is by a marvellous turn re-established upon its ancient basis. And verily that which hath wrought the change will settle it ; that which hath brought such things to pass will keep them where they are, if we do not overlook and sleight it. And what was it but the consent of the universality, the Vote of all *England* ? This did produce an universal motion, exceeding vehement, but not violent: For it was not against, but according to nature. All things having been out of place, and held in a state preternatural, when the force was taken off, moved to their center and place of rest, to wit, the ancient fundamental constitution. And for this cause the change was not terrible, but calm, kindly and unbloody. Now as that natural inclination, which carries things to their resting place, will keep them there, untill by violence they are forced thence ;

thence; so this consent of the universality, which produced a kindly motion of all things to settle in their own place and order upon the right foundation, will keep them there, until such external force shall come, as can break and dissipate the universality. Wherefore seeing this great revolution hath not happened by the prevailing force of one Party, but by the untrained motion of all *England*, what reason is there that one Party should thrust the other out of its due place of rest upon the common Foundation? When common consent hath laid this excellent Foundation of peace and quietness, let not the Superstructure of particular unnecessary forms cast off some as a divided and rejected Party; but let that which hath made peace keep peace; which by Gods help it will surely do, if timely observed and followed.

Section XXVI.

We cannot gainsay but the composition of these differences hath much dif-

ficulty, and requires much prudence,
 care and patience in those that are at the
 helm of Government: Nevertheless
 it may be effected, if the judicious on
 both sides will give consent; and they
 will give consent, if they have a single
 aim to procure the peace of Gods
 Church, and the increase thereof, and
 particularly the increase and stability
 of Protestant Religion: Suppose the
Roman, Grecian, Armenian, Ethiopick,
 together with all the Protestant Churches,
 yea and the whole Christian
 world might be drawn into one
 Church-Communion and Order, upon
 as easie terms as English *Prelatists* and
Presbyterians may, if they have a heart
 to it, were it not prodigious unchari-
 tableness and fury of opposition to
 withstand it? As all the Lovers of
 Christianity would pursue the Union
 of all Christian Churches, upon such
 terms, so should all the Lovers of Pro-
 testantism pursue the Union of all
 Protestant Churches, seeing the Do-
 ctrines wherein they harmoniously a-
 gree

gree will enable them to keep, *the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, if the heart be not opposite to the power of those professed Doctrines. To heal the wounds of the Protestant Cause, how glorious is it? But to refuse and withstand this healing, how doth it cause the Popish faction to glory against us? *Let not our adversaries rejoice, nor the uncircumcised glory in our shame.*

Section XXVII.

We have the examples of Christian Princes, even of those of the Roman Faith; who would gladly have made up breaches in Religion among their people, by yielding in things of greater moment in the Church of *Rome*, then any of the points in question are among disagreeing Protestants. In the Council of *Trent*, *Ferdinand* the Emperour, and *Maximilian* his son King of the Romans, and the French King, and the Duke of *Bavaria* made it their business by their Embassadors, for quic-

eting of their Dominions, that the Communion of the Sacrament in both kinds, the Marriage of Priests, and Divine Service in the vulgar tongue might be allowed. These things are of greater importance among the Papists, than the things now in question are among the Protestants of either persuasion, if we judge by their declared Opinions, and not by some hidden design: And those forenamed Princes would surely have taken that way for uniting their people, had their power been independent in matter of Religion; but having dependance upon the See of *Rome*, they could do nothing without the Authority either of the Pope or the Council; from either of which they perceived after much instance, that such Reformation could not be hoped for. Moreover those Princes being of the Roman Faith, had a fairer pretence according to Popish Principles, to crush the dissenting Part of their Subjects, by laying Heresie to their charge, and so in time to root them

them out, then any Protestant State can have to extirpate the Presbyterians. Likewise the Emperour *Charles* the fifth, after his great Achievements, designing to establish an intire Dominion in Germany, conceived that his way was to unite the German Nation in point of Religion, by a kind of reformation or Accommodation; for which he laboured so much in procuring and upholding the *Trent-Council*; until at length despairing of his Sons succession in the Empire, he laid aside all thoughts of restoring the ancient Religion in *Germany*, and by consequence all care of the Council, though he continued many years after in the Imperial Authority.

Now though all these Princes were deceived in expecting such a Union by means of that Council, which by reason of divers and important Interests of Princes and *Prelates*, could not possibly have such an end as was by some of them desired; yet herein they took not their aim amiss, that the re-uniting of

their broken people, by using a Temper and Accommodation, was the best way to keep their Estates intire.

Section XXVIII.

I am the more importunate in pressing home the motion of brotherly Agreement, considering the time, which may be the only time: For the present condition of these Affairs seem like to the state of a sick body, which Physicians call a *Crisis*, when nature and the disease are in the *crisis* of the conflict, to carry it for life or death. Peace and Concord in Religion seems now to approach to its *Crisis*, whether it shall prevail and live, or dye and fail for ever: It may justly be feared that the time is now or never: For if after so long and sad divisions and the calamitous effects thereof, an implacable spirit shall be seen to bear sway in this time of restauration and expected union, it may beget a despair of all future reconciliation. If after such and so long calamities, all the concurring circumstances

stances of the late Revolution will not incline mens heares to Peace, what will do it? This is a day of gracious Visitation. *Happy England, if in this its day it knows the things that belong to its Peace!*

Having pressed the Union by these Arguments, I proceed to remove certain impediments.

Section XXIX.

One great impediment is an erroneous judgment touching the times foregoing the late Wars. For as much as great and manifold distempers have happened and continued in this Land since the beginning of these troubles, the defects of former times are quite forgotten, as it commonly comes to pass, that latter miseries, if drawn out to any length, do drown the remembrance of by-past evils; but he who discerns only things at hand, and not assar off, is purblind. I abhor to take
upon

upon me the defence of our late distracted times, the distempers whereof I would not in any wise palliate. Nevertheless let this be noted, distempers have their times of breeding as well as of breaking forth. Certainly that dismal Tempest which succeeded the long Calm in this Nation, had its time of gathering in the Clouds. To heal the symptoms of a disease, its rooted cause being neglected, is but a palliative cure. To take away the irregularities of these latter times, and not to inquire into the former causes, is to hide, but not to heal the maladies of this Kingdom.

Section XXX.

Another error which turns away mens eyes from beholding the true state of their own affairs, is a contempt of the dissenting Party, and of their Opinions, as silly and irrational; with which is joyned a vain conceit, that the whole Party with their Opinions would soon fall to the ground, if a few turbu-

turbulent and factious spirits (as they pretend) were taken out of the way. This makes men to bear down their opposites more with scorn and contumely, then with any temperate and solid reasoning. This makes men wilful, precipitate, unmerciful, and puts them forward by rigid injunctions and severe inquisitions to suppress those with whom they might walk in one way, if they themselves did walk in love: But there is as little of Reason as Religion in this self-admiring humour. It is the part of weak and selfish minds to contract Religion to certain modes and forms which stand not by Divine Right, but by the wills of men, and which are of little efficacy, and very disputable, and if supposed lawful, ought to be governed by the rule of Charity. To think that none is a good Christian, a sound *Protestant*, a fit minister, that cannot subscribe to such modes and forms, proceeds from a narrow and ignoble judgment. It is also as much pride as weak-

weakness to condemn the settled way of a knowing and serious people, steady in their Principles and practices, as if they were worthy of no regard, because they dissent in some points which in themselves are of little moment. This is for men to think, that they only are the people, and that wisdom shall dye with them. Noble and high capacities and judgments of a large and deep reach, do know they cannot square the world by the narrow compass of those conceived Principles that have possessed and seasoned their own mindes : But they look also without themselves, rightly judging, that as they have their own peculiar Notions, so another sort have theirs; and that divers men are carried divers ways, as they are led by natural temper, custom, education, or studious inquires. They know likewise that there is no constraining of all mindes to one perswasion, without imbasing their judgments to perfect slavery, which we see put in practice in the Antichristian Kingdom
of

of the Papacy : Whereupon men of vastest parts and learning, and of true nobleness of judgment have been ever favourable to those which dissented only in such opinions, as amongst wise and sober men are not with one consent determined, unless their peculiar Interest were bound up in those Opinions : For this nobleness of judgment, which naturally inclines to allow ones self and others this righteous liberty, is sometimes driven back and streightned by politick Interests. Verily a judgment truly noble is truly Catholick ; and true Catholicism is most contrary to that which is so called by pretended Catholics : For it is to maintain Christian Concord with all Christians, as far as they hold Christ the Head.

Section XXXI.

It is incident to ruling men to cherish the passion of indignation against the dissenting Party. Hence ariseth a great perturbation of judgment : For by reason

son of the dominion of this passion, when dissenters modestly assert their Principles, and do not instantly comply as much as is expected, it is taken for petulancy and peevishness. When some degree of frowardness breaks forth, it is encountred with that severity which hazards the undoing of the weak Part, that should and might be healed: And their dissatisfaction is judged the effect of incurable pride and malice. This perturbation of judgment begets a great distemper in publick Councils. Wherefore let persons bearing Rule watch over this dangerous passion, and dread its tyranny. First, let not perverseness be always imputed to the non-compliance of the inferiour Party. God hath put it into the Kings heart to extend compassion to multitudes of His Loyal Subjects, in taking off the rigour of sundry impositions in matters Ecclesiastical; and they think it good to make use of those His Majesties Concessions, without the prejudice of any part of Religion,
or

or of order and decency in the Church. Others that should have helped forwards His Majesties design of Peace, are offended, saying, The *Presbyterians* yield in nothing, the late indulgence hath made them more resolved against all points of Contormity; but why should their eye be evil because His Majesties eye is good? Have the *Presbyterians* abated nothing, when, for peace sake they have declared a readiness to part with the *Presbyterian* platform of Church-Government, which is used in other Reformed Churches, and to submit to a regulated Episcopacy; as also to wave the Directory for Worship, and to accept a Reformed Liturgy? Indifferent men would judge that this is a good advance towards peace, and that a closure is hereby really intended. But what have the *Prelatists* done in testimony of their moderation? Have they desisted from the use of any one of the former Ceremonies, even such as be not injoynd by any Law or Canon? Suppose

pose some of the Presbyterians (be they few or many) do as yet forbear the using of some Forms, which they apprehend not simply unlawful; perhaps some reason of scandal may cause this forbearance; otherwise to the injudicious they might seem to contradict their own Principles, out of servile fear, or for worldly ends; and the malicious might take occasion, though none were given, to reproach them for temporizing. Now it concerns Christs Ministers to prevent, what in them lies, not onely a just, but even an unjust and causeless contempt of their Ministry. Besides, they are not willing that some persons of good affections, but weaker judgments, should take offence at their early and easie compliance, and so fall into down-right separation. The *Presbyterians* attend a good Reformation, and all necessary enlargement that may encompass and gather together in one all that are of sound belief and good life, who have been so long scattered abroad. Nothing therefore appears
but

but that they have hitherto conscientiously and judiciously made use of His Majesties Favour ; and with great thankfulness have they expressed their sense thereof, in their acknowledgments to God and men : His Royal and Paternal Charity is precious to them.

But suppose that some of this way were guilty of some provoking forwardness, should grave Patriots and wise Counsellors thereupon destroy the weak part, or rather heal it ? A prudent Father is not so provoked by the stubbornness of a Child as to cast him out, and make him desperate, whilst there is yet hope concerning him. It is meet indeed for Princes to express their just indignation, when Subjects presuming on their clemency do not contain themselves within their duty ; and the seasonable expression of such disdain, wisely managed, is of great force in Government ; nevertheless if it get the mastery it is exceeding perillous. It was the Counsel of indignation that proceeded from

P. Rehoboam's

Rehoboam's young Counsellors.

But there is yet a greater mischief, when the cloud of this passion darkens the Understanding, that it cannot distinguish between present dissatisfaction, and incurable pride and malice. When a peoples present dissatisfaction about remediable grievances, shall be deemed implacable enmity, commonly pernicious counsels take place: Then it will be suggested to a Prince, that the Acts of Grace bestowed upon such a people make them but the more insolent: For none may hope to overcome pride by condescension, or inveterate malice by good turns; which is indeed a true saying, but perverted by mis-application. In this case to judge rightly of things that differ, let a Prince consider diligently whether the present averseness proceeds from rooted Principles, and a fixed Interest, inconsistent with the security of his Estate; or from the pressures of the grieved Party, in things which are not the necessary props of his Power, and
without

without which his greatness may well consist; and let him never question the gaining of such a people whose Principles and designs are not against the true and proper Interest of his Estate, whatsoever their present distempers be; for the grievances being redressed, time will wear out those distempers: And in that case a people will not less value their Prince, because he yieldeth to them with respect to his own concerns; for they will not judge it a forced yielding, because that proceeds from force which is yielded for present necessity, and against the main Interest; but they will cleave to him the more, by discerning that his and their good do agree in one; for it makes them hope that he will seek their good as his own. When Governours resent the non-compliances of a party, their best remedy is to remove the occasions, when it may be done without crossing the Interests of State or Maximes of Government; then will the honest-minded be mollified and moulded; and

towards the residue of obstinate persons, if there be any such, severity will be used more successfully. It is the wisdom of rulers by all means to lessen offences, and to contract the number of offenders: For where there are many sufferers upon a Religious account, whether in truth or pretence, there will be a kind of glory in suffering, and sooner or later it may turn to the Rulers detriment.

Section XXXII.

Another great impediment of publick concord is an erroneous confidence in the more numerous Party, that they need not seek nor mind the way of peace; for they reckon themselves sure to carry it by the *major* Vote in all Councils and Conventions; they see wind and tide serving them: But they who consider but few things, do make a sudden judgment, which commonly falls short. Great prosperity oftentimes blinds the wise as well as fools; and great advantages divert the mind from

from heeding many important circumstances of a business, that the judgment made concerning it is most imperfect: Wherefore in the present case it should be minded, that the dissenting party is not small, that it is not made up of the rabble multitude, nor yet of Phantique spirits, but of honest and sober people, who act from principles of knowledge, and can render a reason of their practice, in things pertaining to conscience, with as much discretion as any sort of men in the Nation; that the instances which they make do not concern by-matters and mutable occasions, but matters of conscience, that will never cease nor vary; that they are not a party far distant, but very near; I mean not only in respect of place (for so the *Papists* that live among us cannot be far from us) but of agreement in Principles of Religion, that they cannot be well severed nor kept in a divided State, nor yet be rooted out; but they will grow up under the influence of the Doctrine professed

in the Church of *England*; that in many deliberations they may be able to put things to a stand, and in debates of great consequence to lead the indifferent sort of men, and also many temperate spirits of the other persuasion, by the apparent equity of their proposals.

All these things and more of the like nature, do challenge a due regard from those that would see through a business, and make a perfect judgment. Besides, the judicious should consider not only the bulk and corps of a party, but what spirit doth quicken them, and with what vivacity and constancy their motions do proceed, and their Interest is pursued. It comes also within the compass of this inquiry to know the intrinsic strength of the *Hierarchy*, and what they can do when they stand by themselves alone; for their adventitious strength may fail them. We need not tell them, that on their side at present the advantage is very great, yet haply it may appear in shew greater then it is indeed. Though the English Nation
appear

appear to affect a stated Order in the Church, nevertheless they may not serve the designs of the Hierarchy, nor yet be conscious thereof. Upon the late great revolution, the multitude do easily run from one extream to another, thinking they cannot run too far from those troubles and discomposures which last oppressed them. But as the prudent ponder their paths at present, so the passionate multitude may at length know where they are, and discern alike the evil of both extreams. Many that are lifted up may give offence, and fall under great displeasure; they that are cast down may be better advised by their sufferings, and remove the occasions of stumbling, and so become, if not endeared, yet inoffensive to the Nation. Such vicissitudes of love and hatred do happen in every age, and *there is no new thing under the sun.*

Section XXXIII.

Another obstacle in the way of this conjunction is an opinion of many, that

the sure and only means of preventing schism, and maintaining unity in the Church, is by multiplying Ceremonial injunctions and Canons, by requiring full conformity to controverted forms, which might well be spared, by exacting not only submission of practice, but assent of judgment declared by subscription to all particulars of Doctrine, Worship and Discipline, in every jot and tittle thereof. But in very deed this is the sure way of endless dissension among a people that are not bottomed on this principle of believing as the Church believes: This kind of imposing hath discomposed all Christendom, and rends the several Churches from each other, and makes the rent incurable. It is the way of the Church of *Rome*, which upon this account is guilty of the foulest schism that was ever made in the Christian world. It is a notable saying of *Chillingworth*,——
Not Protestants for rejection, but the Church of Rome for imposing on the faith of Christians, Doctrines unwritten and

and unnecessary, and for disturbing the Churches peace, and dividing Unity in such matters, is in an high degree presumptuous and schismatical. — God is jealous for his worship, and consciences well informed and duly tender are likewise jealous concerning it, lest they should provoke God to jealousy. **Mindes** truly religious do set an high price on matters of conscience, and will expose all to sale rather then cross their principles. Wherefore if in matters of perpetual controversie between godly wise persons, the Church shall make peremptory decrees and severe injunctions, it must needs dissolve the band of unity. But the best and surest means of preventing and suppressing Schisms, is to prevent corrupt administrations, and real scandals in matters Ecclesiasticall, and seasonably to reform abuses, and not to interpose in lesser differences.

Section XXXIV.

Furthermore, a great prejudice is taken

ken up against Bishops ruling in conso-
 ciation with Presbyters, and against
 Classica, or Presbyterian meetings, as
 inclining to Faction, and likely to pro-
 duce alterations, which evils are sup-
 posed to follow the distributing of the
 power among many. Whereupon the
 Government of a single Person, or a
 Bishop having sole Jurisdiction, is ap-
 prehended to be the surest means of
 keeping Church affairs in a fixed state :
 This prejudice having a great shew of
 truth, we must stoop to pry into it more
 narrowly. And first we have this poli-
 tical maxime to direct us in this inqui-
 ry, that the condition of the people to
 be governed is the best rule of discern-
 ing the aptest form of Government.
 And according to this principle we re-
 solve, that absolute *Prelacy* is the on-
 ly Government to hold a people that
 content themselves with a customary
 service, and the Religion of their Coun-
 try, and of their fore-fathers, whatso-
 ever it be. All Discourses, Debates,
 Disputations, and all occasions of con-
 test

test touching Religion, and particularly that exercise which is called prophesying, must be avoided. But this Government is not so agreeable to a people that are given to search the Scriptures, and try Doctrines, In *England* where the inferior Clergy or Parochial Ministry is not rude and ignorant, but in a great part learned and conscientious, where the common people in a great part try all things, that they may *hold fast that which is good*; the Ecclesiastical jurisdiction cannot conveniently reside in a Prelate alone governing by severe Canons, and denouncing excommunication against all those that express any dissent from any particulars of the received Forms of Worship and Discipline. For among such a people, this is a likelier way to beget some great distemper, then to keep all in quietness and deep silence. But a form of Government more free by distributing the power among many, and regular meetings for free debates within certain limits will be much more peace-

peaceable and successful. It is here acknowledged that in such an order of things dissensions may arise, and cause some interruptions. Nevertheless no great inconvenience, but sometimes much advantage may follow. The stirrings of warm contests may be unadvisedly condemned, For as Thunder purgeth the Air, so these stirrings may purge the Church from Corruptions ingendering in it. Let the frame and order of things be so established, that both parties may be made hopeless concerning factious attempts of promoting this or that extream, that the contests may not be on the one side for Dominion, nor on the other side for inordinate liberty, but on both sides for Truths due freedom, and then they will end in peace. If great mistakes should arise in such meetings, and seem for a while to pass currently, there may be found some persons of that wisdom, integrity and reputation, as to be able to shew the fallacy, and to convince those of both sides that intend
uprightly

uprightly. In which case if they perceive an evil spirit on work, and an evil design hatching among some, they will turn away with indignation from the contrivers of such mischief. Wherefore let the frame of Ecclesiastical politic lean neither towards Tyranny nor Anarchy, but be set upright for just liberty. Let good orders be kept and priviledges not violated, and the greater number of those who mean honestly will not be led into the snare of faction. And selfish ambitious pragmatick spirits that trouble them will easily be detected and abandoned.

Section XXXV.

Unto this reasoning let the authority of an Eminent pacifique Bishop be superadded, concerning the way of order and stability in the conjunction of Episcopacy and Presbytery. Bishop Hall in his Discourse, Intituled, *A modest offer of some meet considerations to the Assembly of Divines at Westminster*, commends the method of the Church

Church of Scotland for prevention of Error and Heresie by a gradual proceeding from the parochial meeting to the *Presbytery*, from thence to the provincial Synod, and from thence to the general Assembly for determining any controverſie, ſaying, — *This bears the face of a very fair and laudable courſe, and ſuch as deſerves the approbation of all the well-willers to that Diſcipline.* — But let me add, That either we have or may have (in this very ſtate of things, with ſome ſmall Variation) in effect the very ſame Government with us. Inſtead of *Presbyteries* conſiſting of ſeveral Paſtors, we have our combinations of Miniſters in our ſeveral Deanries, over whom the rural Dean is choſen every year by the Miniſters of that Diviſion, as their Moderator. This Deanry or *Presbytery* may be enjoined to meet every moneth, or oftner, in ſome City or Town next to them, and there they may have their exerciſe of Prophecyng; as I have known it practiſed in ſome parts of this Kingdom, as it is earneſtly wiſhed and recommended by that

Excellently

Excellently Learned Lord Verulam in his prudent Considerations; where if any Question fall of determination, it may be referred gradually from the lesser to the greater Assemblies, till it be brought to a National Synod. In the same discourse the said Bishop commends one constant, prudent, vigilant Overseer, superadded to a Grave, Judicious Presbytery, without concurrence of which Presbytery, the Bishop or Overseer should not take upon him to inflict Excommunication, or any other important Censure.

Having discovered certain general Impediments, I proceed to Argue upon the particular Concernments of the King, of the Nobility and Gentry, and of the Episcopal Clergy.

Section XXXVI.

His Majesties Concernment in this grand Affair transcends the particular concernments of all others, whether Parties or Persons, and that beyond all comparison: Others may advance themselves and Families by the present occasions, and give over in time when they have builded their own houses. Many, and perhaps the most, if changes come, may retreat and serve the Times for their own security; but the King never descends from the Stage of publick Action, and can never cease to be interess'd in His people. Others having much to get and little to lose, may make themselves by present advantages; but the King hath little to get, but much to secure; and not the present occasional and mutable advantage, but perpetual stability is His Interest. His Majesty hath worthily gained the Reputation of a Wise and Gracious Prince, of an excellent spirit and temper for these times: And truly

truly a Prince as wise as *Solomon*, hath no Wisdom to spare from the weight of these businesses. Let the God of the spirits of all flesh, and the Father of Lights, continually give to His Majesty a large heart, and comprehensive Understanding, that may see far and near, and fetch within its compass all circumstances, consequents and moments that are requisite to the forming of a perfect judgment concerning these great Affairs.

Section XXXVII.

After so long a War between King and Parliament, and after all the changes in Government, the King being at length restored to His full Power and Greatness, and the people being satiated with Civil Warres, tumults and changes; it may be concluded, that they will not easily run the hazard of abetting any Parties, in contradiction to Him: But this is happily or unhappily suggested, as it is turned to a good or a bad use: Though evil Counsels
Q may

may turn it to a bad use, yet it yields unspeakable advantage to the wholesome Counsels both of King and People, for the good of both. The people knowing that acquiescence in present things is their best security, will not be given to change; and the King knowing the peoples indisposition to abet a change, will have little occasion of jealousy. And their mutuall confidence, which is the strongest bond of peace, will lead them without rub or let into a settled mutuall happiness. But it is not good advice to neglect a peoples interest, or to use them with less regard, because they are willing to hug their own peace in any tolerable condition. The Sovereigns greatness, and the peoples freedom, are but one fabrick resting upon the same fundamental constitution. If you shake the one, you shake the other also. I detest and abhorre the tumults and insurrections of the people, and the resisting of the Sovereign power. Let wickedness proceed from the wicked. But let none that seek a righteous end tread

tread in unrighteous ways: let no well-minded person be drawn into such a snare of reproach and ruine. I am perswaded that the generality of the *Presbyterian* denomination would indure extremities, before they would revenge or defend themselves by unlawfull means, as rebelling against their lawfull Sovereign. As I finde my own heart, so do I judge of others. Nevertheless let a wise Prince consider, that the divine providence can by ways without number change the face and state of things, when a dissatisfied conscientious party shall not stir one foot to indeavour a change. Wherefore let Counsels of safety and stability take place, that a Princes interest may stand firm against all assaults of unexpected accidents.

Section XXXVIII.

It hath been judged a Maxime in Policy, that to head faction is agreeable to one aspiring to soveraignty, but not to one possessed of it. Also that to

Q 2 uphold

uphold division is the way to subdue a people, but not to hold them in firm obedience, when subbu'd. *Machiavel* shews the inconvenience that ariseth to a Prince by holding a people under his Government divided into factions, because he will be inclined (as all by nature are) to take part in any thing that is divided, and to be pleased more with this then with that party, whereupon the other is discontented. And he brings in a pertinent story, That in the year 1501. a Gentleman sent by the King of *France* into *Italy*, to cause restitution of certain lost Towns to the *Florentines*, finding in every one of those Fortresses men, who, when they came to visit him, said, that they were of such a faction, much blamed their division, saying, that in *France*, if one of the Kings subjects should say he were of the Kings party, he should be punished, because such a speech would signifie no less then that there were in the Country people enemies to the King; whereas the King willeth that all those
Towns

Towns be his friends, and united within themselves. Let me rehearse the Counsell of our late Sovereign to His Majesty that now is---Take heed of abetting any Faction, or applying to any publick discriminations in matters of Religion, contrary to what is in your own judgement, and the Churches well settled. Your partial adhering as head to any one side, gains you not so great advantages in some mens hearts, who are prone to be of their Kings Religion, as it loseth you in others, who think themselves and their profession first despised, then persecuted by you. Take such a course as may either with calmnesse and charity quite remove the seeming differences and offences by impartiality; or so order affairs in point of power, that you need not to fear or flatter any Faction---Now if the case were such, that one party were the Kings onely Confidants, and that the other cannot be faithfull to him upon immutable grounds and reasons, then policy would advise him so to order things in point of power, that he need

not fear nor flatter the adverse party. But it is evident that the *Presbyterians* love the King, and Kingly Government, and account themselves happy in His Majesties clemency, allowing them a just and inoffensive liberty in certain matters of Conscience. It is also evident to all impartial Judgements, that his Majesties calmness and charity may remove the seeming differences, and offences on their part. They are ready to comply with Episcopacy regulated, and Liturgy corrected; and they preferre union by accommodation before Toleration with Division.

Section XXXIX.

If it be objected, that the King by carrying an even hand between both parties will insure neither, for both will remain dissatisfied; I reply, this argument were of force, if the differences must remain uncompounded, and the parties publickly divided into two opposite societies; but we lay this for a ground-work, that these twain are to be

be made one as to publick communion in divine worship, and to an agreement in one common interest relating both to the Protestant Religion and to this Kingdom, which His Majesties wisdom may accomplish by a prudent disposing of those things which indifferently belong to both, and wherein they both agree; and in divers things that are peculiar to this or that side, he may gratifie the one and the other with moderation, as when the favours vouchsafed to the one are not injurious to the others peace: In which case indeed, here may remain men of different perswasions, but not of divided parties and interests. Besides, if some on either hand should become turbulent, and cry we will have all or none, yet the greater number, yea the main body of either side may be found of calmer judgments and affections, who together with a multitude of wise and well minded persons that are indifferent between both perswasions, would cause the violent ones to keep

with in bounds. And as many of those passionate men as have any judgment will discern, that they are without hope of prevailing, and disadvantage themselves by opposing the common interest and quiet of the Nation.

Section X L.

His Majesty is a great King, he is King indeed, and reigns in great power over a willing people. He hath in his hands the joynt stock or common interest of the whole Nation, Neither of these grand parties can subsist without him; and this gives him assurance, that they are and must be both his. It is manifest that his interest hath gotten the preheminance over all partial interests, as indeed it ought. For if the Prince be not in this regard transcendent, he is ready to be laid low. Wise men inform us, that a Prince by adhering to one Faction, may in time lift it up above his own Imperial interest, which will be forced to give way to it as the lesser to the greater. And the

the prime leaders of the potent Faction will sway more then the Prince himself. They will become arrogant, unthankfull, and boundless in their ambitious designs. It is observed of *Henry* the Third of *France*, that he would be taken into the League with the Princes of his own Kingdome to root out the Protestants, and after awhile the same League was turned against him. A Prince may be so intangled, that he shall not know how to winde out of those wayes wherein he hath so far engaged himself; neither shall he be able to turn himself to the necessity of his own affairs as new accidents arise. Then is a Prince truely potent when he hath all particular Factions lying at his feet, and can compel them to live in peace with one another. This is the potency of our Sovereign Lord this day. For he is alone, and there is none besides him, on whom the Nation can have any stable dependance. Wherefore let His Majesties high concerns be the *primam mobile* to carry about

about all the inferiour Orbs in our political world.

Section XLI.

His Majesty hath gained his peoples hearts, and is glorious in their eyes, and by his continued clemency he will not fail to hold them fast to himself. He desires to govern well, and they desire to be well governed, and seek no greater liberty. In some tender points of Conscience they wait upon his indulgence, and are willing to close with uniformity, not in rigour, but in some convenient latitude and relaxation: There is an yielding that is no way abject, but generous and advantageous, a Princely condescension, whereby a King becomes more absolute, and may have what he will from his loving subjects. And they will no less fear him then love him, as knowing both his goodness and his greatness. For he is great indeed to whom the hearts of three Nations are linked; and it is morally impossible that so vast a people should

should at once be lost to a King who continues to deserve well of them, and to make them his favourites. And then what person or party shal dare to sleight his Government, whose interest and influence is of so large extent?

X LII.

There is a saying, which by many hath been taken up for a proverb. *No Bishop, no King.* I do not well understand the rise of this saying, and therefore dare not speak in derogation of their judgments who were the Authors of it. But upon the matter it self, I crave leave to make this modest Animadversion. And first, it is some degrading to the transcendent interest of Sovereignty, to affix unto it a necessity of any one partial interest for its support: for independency and self-subsistence, without leaning upon any Party, is a Prince his strength and glory. Also it makes that Party over-confident, and its opposite too despondent. Such sayings as import a Princes necessary dependence

dence on any particular Party, may in the mouths of subjects be too presumptuous, and in the mouth of a Prince too unwary. But of this particular I dare not so speak, in as much as I know not its rise and reason. Only this I humbly conceive, that the coalition of Episcopacy and Presbytery, sets forth a Bishop in conjunction with Presbyters, of no less dependence on the sovereign, and of more influence on the people, than a Bishop having sole jurisdiction can have in the present age.

Section XLIII.

As concerning the Nobility and Gentry of this Kingdom, who for the greater part are said to favour Prelacy, They cannot in reason be offended at such a regulated Episcopacy, when they shall behold its order and harmony, and tendency to a general peace. It seems agreeable to their Nobleness, to affect a comely and venerable Order in the Church for the honour of Religion. And let them judge whether the
Wor-

Worship of God be more holy and reverend for those many Gesticulations and various postures interchangeably used in parts of divine Service that are of the same kinde, and require equall Reverence. Whether a grave habit of civil decency for a Minister, is less decent in sacred Administrations then certain other Vestments which some scruple, as conceiving that holiness is placed in them? Whether a Church settled by limited Episcopacy, cannot attain to its due veneration without the Hierarchical dominion and splendor: The reduction of absolute Prelacy to Episcopal presidency here desired, may concern the Nobility and Gentry as well as others. For as others may be oppressed, so these may be overtopped. Excessive power is commonly exercised beyond their intentions, that are eager to set it up. And they that thought onely of crushing a party offensive to them, may at length finde themselves obnoxious, or at least neglected and undervalued. On the other

side, they have little cause to fear that which is commonly so much dreaded, namely the excessive rigour of discipline from a president Bishop, and grave Presbyters joyntly governing. For it is supposed that no act of Discipline shall be exercised against or besides the Lawes of the Land, which cannot be made without consent of the Nobles and Commons in Parliament.

Section XLIV.

Let the Episcopal Clergy admit an address to themselves touching their own concernments: Peradventure they either suspect or disdain the counsel of one that may seem an adversary; but whatever they apprehend, it is the counsel of one who with his whole heart desires that they may not miscarry, who accounts them too precious to be lost to their brethren, if they will permit themselves upon any reasonable terms to be gained; who would gladly walk with them by the same Rule

Rule in things received in common, which are sufficient for Christian concord, and should be so acknowledged by all that mind the things of Christ more then their own things. Were I a true hater of that Party, or a right Phanatick, I should wish for their violent irruption upon the Presbyterians even as vehemently as now I pursue the design of peace; and I verily think my reasoning, however it takes with them, will convince them of my good intention: if they decline moderate counsels, and resolve to run high, they may attain to a lofty standing; howbeit they will always stand on a pinnacle: In a little time they have greatly enlarged their borders and lengthened their cords; it were good that now they should strengthen their stakes, and make good their ground: By moderation only can they be established. Some may say in their hearts, *The bricks are fallen downe, but we will build with hewen Stones; the Sycamores are cut down, but we will change them*

them into Cedars. Indeed their advantage is well known; nevertheless let them consider their constant strength, and accordingly limit their hopes; for this is an high point of wisdom. Let them that have gotten a victory use it wisely, and take care that they lose it not in hope of a greater. The issue of things oft times hath proved unfortunate to those that have waxed insolent and unreasonable upon unexpected successes. There is not a greater error then to refuse terms of Agreement that are profered by a Party which cannot be rooted out, but will be always considerable either as friends or enemies, especially when those terms do comprise some part of their victory that should accept them. Let the Episcopal Clergy observe the spirit of the Nation, and the condition of the Times, that they may rightly comprehend the measure of their own hopes. The English are a generous Nation, and as they delight in the Majesty and Glory of their King, so
also

also in the splendid condition of subordinate Governours, that their manner of living be in some sort conformable to the dignity and opulency of the Nation: Accordingly they seem to take pleasure that the Ecclesiastical State be upheld by a fair Revenue and competent Dignity, yet with moderation: For if the Clergy do rise to Princely or Lordly wealth and power; they may become the envy of the Nobility and Gentry: Let them remember, they stand by Grace, not by their own strength, but by their Prince His Favour. The Nation in general may be taken with a grave and masculine decency in all Sacred things futable to their spiritual Majesty; but I make a Question whether in this noon-tide of the Gospel they will fall in love with excessive gaudiness, pompous shews, and various affected gestures in Sacred Administrations; and not rather esteem them vanities too much detracting from the dignity and purity of Gospel-Worship. In this noon-tide of the

Gospel the Bishops cannot magnifie their Office but by other courses then what were taken in former and darker times. Meer formalities will no longer dazle our eyes: We shall think they have work of an higher nature, then to look only to the observation of outward Forms, and Rites, and Ceremonies: they must make a nearer approach to the *Presbyterian* practice in the constant Preaching of the Word, in the strict observation of the Lords Day, in keeping a true watch over the Flock, and in correcting the real scandals that break forth in mens conversations: And if they walk in these paths, the *Prelatists* and *Presbyterians* will not be far asunder. Perhaps the friends of *Prelacy* may imagine, that in this coalition *Presbytery* may at length undermine *Episcopacy*; but reason shews that *Episcopacy* will stand more firm in conjunction with *Presbytery*, then by it self alone.

In the body natural there is some predominant humour, as *sanguine*, *cholick*,
rick,

rick, melancholy, or phlegmatick; yet none of these do subsist alone without the mixture of the rest in a due temperament. In like manner the Body Ecclesiastical may be of several complexions or constitutions, as *Episcopal*, or *Presbyterial*, according to the predominant quality. Now if the *Presbyterian* Churches would become more firm and stable by the superintendency of one grave President, (and the truth is, in all *Presbyteries* there appeareth some *Episcopacy* either formal or virtual) so an *Episcopal* Church may be judged more firm and stable by a Bishops superintendency in consociation with assistant *Presbyters*. And to remove the fear of the incroachments of *Presbytery*, it is easie to discern, that *Episcopacy* if it contains it self within moderate bounds, will be always in this National Church the predominant quality.

*In the Conclusion of this Discourse
let me offer these few Essayes
concerning the pathes of peace.*

Section XLV.

The glorifying and pleasing of the highest Potentate and universal Monarch, and the eternal happines of immortal precious souls, are the most noble and blessed ends of Government. Let his Majesties Reign be happy and glorious in attaining these ends. A Christian King esteems it the excellency of his regal Power to hold and manage it as the servant of Jesus Christ, to be a Protector of the true Church, the Body of Christ the Lambs wife, for whose redemption Christ dyed, and for whose gathering and perfecting, the world is continued. It is the Character of this true Church, to make the holy Scriptures the perfect rule of their faith and life, to worship God in spirit and in truth, according to the power
and

and spiritual worship of the Gospel, to walk by the rule of the new Creature in spiritual mortification and crucifixion to the world, to study holiness in sincerity, to strive to advance it in themselves and others, and to have influence upon others unto sound knowledge, faith, humility, godliness, justice, temperance, charity. The true Church lies in the middle between two extremes, Formalists and Fanatics. They are of circumspect and regular walking, no way forward in attempting or desiring alterations in a civil State. A Prince doth hold them in obedience under a double bond. For they know they must needs be subject not only for wrath, but for conscience sake. Indeed we will not conceal, that in lawful wayes they assert that liberty which is settled by the known Laws and fundamental Constitutions, the maintaining whereof is the Prince's as much as the Peoples safety.

Section

Section XLVI.

That being the happiest politie that is founded in true Religion, and most fully suited to mens everlasting concerns, it greatly behoveth Governors to mark and avoid those things which bring Religion into contempt, and tend to the increase of Atheism and infidelity. The many various Sects and absurd opinions and fancies, and pretended Revelations of these latter times, have much lessened the reverence of Religion in *England*. This is a great evil, and much observed and decryed by the present times. There is another evil no less injurious to the honour and estimation of Christian piety, to wit, Ceremonial strictness with real prophaness, or at the most but lukewarmness in the real part of Religion. And this is the true state of the Papacy, by occasion whereof Atheists have so abounded in *Italy*. *Machiavel* observes in his time, that Christianity was no where less honoured then in
Rome,

Rome, which is the pretended Head thereof. Let this evil be seen, prevented and remedied, that the sacred name of the Church be given to a society not carnal, but truly spiritual, according to that of the Apostle, *We are the Circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

Section XLVII.

It is the preheminance of His Majesty, as General Bishop of the Land, (for so He is in a political sence) to visit His people of all ranks by His prudent inspection: And it is worthy of His chiefeft care and search to know whether every Pastor be resident with his own Flock, and doth constantly on every Sabbath teach them the good Knowledge of God; what Pluralists do seize upon several Congregations, thrusting or barring out laborious Ministers, and leaving the sheep in the hands of one who is a meer mercenary, and careth not for them; whether

Preaching in Cathedral Churches be more frequent since the reviving of Deans and Chapters then before, when those places were supplied by one or two stipendiary Ministers; whether the Precincts of Cathedrals be the purest parts of the Land, and the Members thereof the purest parts of the Clergy, as in reason they ought to be. In all His Majesties Superintendency there is nothing of greater moment, then to provide that the Order and Frame of Ecclesiasticks have not a tendency to make the superior Clergy proud and covetous, and the inferior poor and vicious.

Section XLVIII.

A good Constitution or Frame of Ecclesiastical Politie is incomparably more available to produce good effects, then good Canons or good Governors can be where the Constitution is naught: For in such a state good Canons and good Governours will not be able to reform abuses and correct scandals,

dals, and promote the true end of Church Discipline.

In the *Trent-Council* the Papalins or the Popes Creatures held this for a maxime, *That the Decrees of Reformation could not diminish the profits of the Court of Rome, as long as the Authority of the Apostolique See was not impaired.* The Council being ended, and the Decrees coming to be ratified by the Pope, and the Officers of the Court representing their losses and prejudices by the Ratification, and the Pope thereby perplexed, and the Cardinals divided in their Opinions, one Bishop, a man well conversant in Court Affairs, said, *That he could not chuse but wonder at this great fear, concerning the confirmation of the Decrees, which he saw did arise without reason; for that Lawes have no power but what is given them by him that Governeth; That the Pope by his Exposition might give them a larger or a stricter sence; yea, and contrary to that which the words do import, That he might ordain a particular Congregation for expound-*

pounding the Council, and affectually provide that none should be able to alleadge the Decrees in prejudice of the Courts.

The Pope was satisfied with these reasons, being perswaded that it would fall out as the Bishop had said: And so the Decrees of Reformation proved of no effect to reform the enormities of the Court of Rome: By this it appears, that new Laws and Decrees work little where a corrupt Frame remaineth still in force. If in such a state of things good men promoted to Government should do their utmost to rule well, they are no more able to reform the Churches committed to them, then the two *Cato's* to reform the Roman Commonwealth, when it was wholly corrupted and out of frame. Beside, in a corrupt frame of Politie there are these two great evils; the one, that good men will soon degenerate; the other, that bad men led by ambition and avarice, will by Arts proper to the times more easily get promotions: and a good Prince shall see it and not know
how

how to help it. That Politie, whether Civil or Ecclesiastical, is well constituted, that in its frame is apt to bridle humane desires; but that is ill constituted which lets loose the reins to appetite. No function or calling is exempted from the corruption that is in the world through lust. And the grandeur of this world is not more perilous to any then to Ecclesiastical persons.

Section XLIX.

It is a singular excellency in any frame of Politie, that the power of doing good be very ample, and that a power to hurt be as much contracted and restrained as the ends of Government will permit: And verily no wise and gracious persons would willingly be tempted with a power to hurt, if they be sufficiently impowered to do good without it: Besides, it is an odious power, and makes the Office hateful. Now the way to this happy Order of things is obvious. Let not se-

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vere Lawes and Canons, concerning things disputable and unnecessary, which may insnare the consciences of godly, orthodox and peaceable persons, remain in force. The most zealous assertors and rigid imposers of Ceremonies acknowledge, that they are not necessary parts of Worship: the declaring, That holiness is not to be placed in them, is their best defence against the charge of wil-worship. Therefore to suspend and silence able and painful Ministers, to vex and punish other godly Christians that cannot submit to those Ceremonies, is to procure much evil without a benefit to counter-vail it. A power of doing much harm and little good, is unhappily placed in any sort of men, but especially in Christs spiritual officers, who according to the Apostles words, have received authority from the Lord, for edification, and not for destruction.

Section L?

The most renowned Polititian observes

serves, that those Kingdoms, Republicks, and sects of Religions subsist longest, that are often renewed or brought back to their first beginnings. For the beginnings of all these must needs contain some goodness in them, by means whereof they rise to their first reputation and increase. Now in process of time that goodness will be overgrown by corruption; and unless something happen to reduce it to the just mark, those Societies must needs be destroyed. And touching Religions, he proves these Reformations necessary by the example of the Roman Religion, saying, — *If it had not been reduced again to its principles by St. Francis, and St. Dominick, it would have been quite defaced. For these by their poverty, and imitation of Christs life, made a new impression thereof in mens minds, which was quite blotted out thence, and their new rules were so powerful, and are now the cause that the dishonesty of the Prelates and Heads of Religion do not ruine it, partly by their living in poverty,*

erty, and partly by the credit they have in confessing the people and preaching to them.— Indeed this Author doth not hit the mark, (and no marvel) touching the true principles of Christianity, and right imitation of Christ, the reviving whereof he ascribes to those two popish Saints; but his reason of Religion in general is solid and excellent, and his instances in particular are right and sound, being applyed (as they are) to the upholding of the popish Religion. As for Religion truly Christian, the way to preserve it in its power and glory, is frequently to reduce it to its first beginnings; for then was its goodness most eminent. The primitive spirit of the Christian Church was a spirit of power and glory, and the primitive order was most spiritual and powerful. Let Christs holy Institutions, let Apostolical precept and practice be the pattern of our Reformation. What sound Protestant will deny the holy Scriptures to be a perfect rule of all divine Institutions? To them we
 appeal,

appeal, by them would we stand or fall; and they mention no Ministers of the Gospel, that were not Bishops ruling the flock. But in pursuance of peace, touching the matter of Episcopacy, the moderate Presbyterians are willing to descend to the times lower by one degree, and to come to the Ages next following the Scripture-times, and to accept what they do present unto us, to wit, a President-Bishop ruling in consort with Presbyters, and Officer not of an other Order then Presbyters, but of an higher degree in the same Order. We appeal to those times concerning this matter. And they that admire and almost adore antiquity should not deny our just appeal.

And wherein stands the power and glory of the Church militant? Doth it stand in the pompous shews of Ceremonious worship, with the glistering furniture thereof, in the secular dignities and jurisdictions of the higher rank of Ecclesiasticks, in the implicate faith of the Laicks, and in a formal uniformity

mity in the outside of Religion? Or in the powerful preaching of the Gospel by able Ministers of the New Testament, in the lively and spiritual manner of prayer, in the dispensation of Sacraments after a manner most effectual to the increase of knowledge, faith, and virtue, in the exercise of discipline to correct all contumacious disobedience against the known laws of Christ our King and Law-giver, and all performed in a comely order with a grave and sober decency? Let all unprejudiced minds give judgement; which of these two different states of Religion doth most express the Gospel-ministration; which is called the ministration of the Spirit, and is incomparably more glorious and powerful, then the Mosaical dispensation with all its outward and visible splendor. Let them also judge which of these two is most conformable to the state of the primitive times, wherein the Christian Church, not by an arm of flesh and the wisdom of this world, but by weapons mighty

mighty through God, as the Evangelical doctrine and discipline, the holiness of believers, the constancy of Martyrs, overturned the Kingdom of Satan, and advanced the Kingdom of Christ, where Satans Throne was, in opposition to the power of the Roman Empire, the wisdom of the learned Heathens, the counsels of Politicians, the potency of ancient Customs, the inveterate prejudice of all sorts of people; and lastly, in opposition to the Devil reigning and raging in them all. Wherefore let us mind the true way of restoring the Christian Religion to its primitive power and glory.

Section LI.

It is a happy frame and order, when things are settled for general satisfaction, that none or very few of the serious people desire an alteration, but all, or most of them dread it; as also when things are settled for stability, that none, who have a will to it, can encompass an alteration. It is a happy thing to

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light upon the way that leads to this satisfaction, and to this stability. In religion the way of general satisfaction is not to gratifie the humour and appetite of one or more parties, but to secure the consciences of the judicious and sober minded in general. For such on all sides will sway most for continuance; and if they be satisfied, intemperate and unquiet spirits would quickly be out of breath in their rash attempts. Likewise the way of stability, that none may succesfully project a change, is to prevent mens running into extreems on either hand. For when one extreame prevaiileth, a change easily followeth. In this case it fares with the Church as with civil States. A principality heightened into Tyranny, tumbles down into Anarchy, and a Republick too much cherishing popular extravagancies lifts up a tyranny. Now the way to prevent extreems, is either to chuse moderate spirits, or else a balancing number of the opposite parties to the managing of publick affairs. In
which

which election a Prince doth not appear as a Neuter, but as a moderator and true Governour, that hath the command of all interests.

Section LII.

And now having pursued Peace to the utmost of my small ability in these pacifick Discourses, I hope this diligent search after the knowledg of good and evil in this kind will not be judged an eating of the forbidden fruit, an ambitious and bold inquiry into things not to be made known. For it is not a curious or presumptuous intruding into the Counsels of Princes, and secrets of Government; but a modest and sober deliberation upon things open and manifest, and of publick inquisition and discourse. Besides, it is an extraordinary time, wherein there are great thoughts, yea great searchings of heart in men of all degrees and all persuasions. It is true, that this Nation is not erecting a new Kingdom, nor laying new foundations of Government; yet

it is no less true, that this restauration is as it were life from the dead, and we are in some sort beginning the world anew. It is a notable *Epocha*, or period of time, giving opportunity to cut off excesses, to make up defects, and to make crooked things straight, before we be fixed and ingaged in particular wayes, from which though never so inconvenient, we may not be able to draw back or turn aside. It is affirmed by one of piercing knowledge in affairs of this nature, that it is a profitable order in a Commonwealth, for any one to propose what is for the publick good. Surely the Kingdom cannot suffer by the proposals of the meanest persons, when they touch not upon the fundamental Constitution, nor disturb publick peace and order. This Discourse offers no disturbance to such Forms and Orders as have attained a quiet stated posture in these times. The Lawes have made some alteration in things of former use and practice, as the Act for abolishing the high Commission.

mission. The times have made more alterations in mens minds and wayes; and his Majesty hath observed a necessity, or at least expediency of some alterations, whereby the minds of men may be composed, and the peace of the Church established, declaring—*That he hath not the least doubt but the present Bishops will think, that the Concessions made by him to allay the present Distempers, are very just and reasonable.*

Lastly, The scope of this Treatise doth justifie and defend it self, whereof the bare narration is a full Vindication; For the sum of the whole matter is to perswade a turning from the advancement of a partial Interest, and a turning to the obvious and easie way of giving general satisfaction to all those that acknowledge the Church of *England* to be a true Church, and are willing to abide in her Communion.

FINIS.



An Advertisement to the Reader.

THere are lately Printed twenty one
Sermons Preached upon severall
occasions; By Edward Reynolds, D. in
Divinity, and Bishop of Norwich, in
quarto; None of which are contained in
his large Volume: And are to be sold at the
Rose and Crown in St. Pauls Church-
yard, 1661.

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